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Radical rocker who changed music forever

WWII SERIAL KILLER
Horror crimes of the Butcher of Paris

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Women who fought for power in the Holy Land

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ISSUE 125

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A relief of Xerxes from the remains of his palace in Persepolis, Iran

Welcome

When it comes to ancient civilisations, I imagine my familiarity is similar to most others, with Egypt, Greece and Rome dominating my understanding. However, one of the cradles of civilisation was the Middle East and I'm always keen to broaden my knowledge of its past. One of the great stories from this part of the world is the Achaemenid Empire, with a special focus on three of its first four kings – Cyrus the Great, Darius I and Xerxes I – better known than some rulers of the time thanks to their interactions with the Greeks. It's the last of these, whom some will know best from the outlandish depiction in the movie *300*, that we turn our attention to this issue. Regularly a classic villain character in Greek tales, especially compared to his predecessors, who is the real Xerxes?

We unpick that history this issue with the help of regular contributor Murray Dahm, tracking how the Persian king lived in the shadow of his father, gained such a bad reputation and to what degree his reign began the decline of the empire. Also this issue we celebrate the life and music of Jimi Hendrix, whose 80th birthday was just a few weeks ago, we unlock the secrets of the Hellfire Club, uncover the lives of some of the queens of Jerusalem and learn why Charlemagne was such a groundbreaking monarch. Enjoy the issue.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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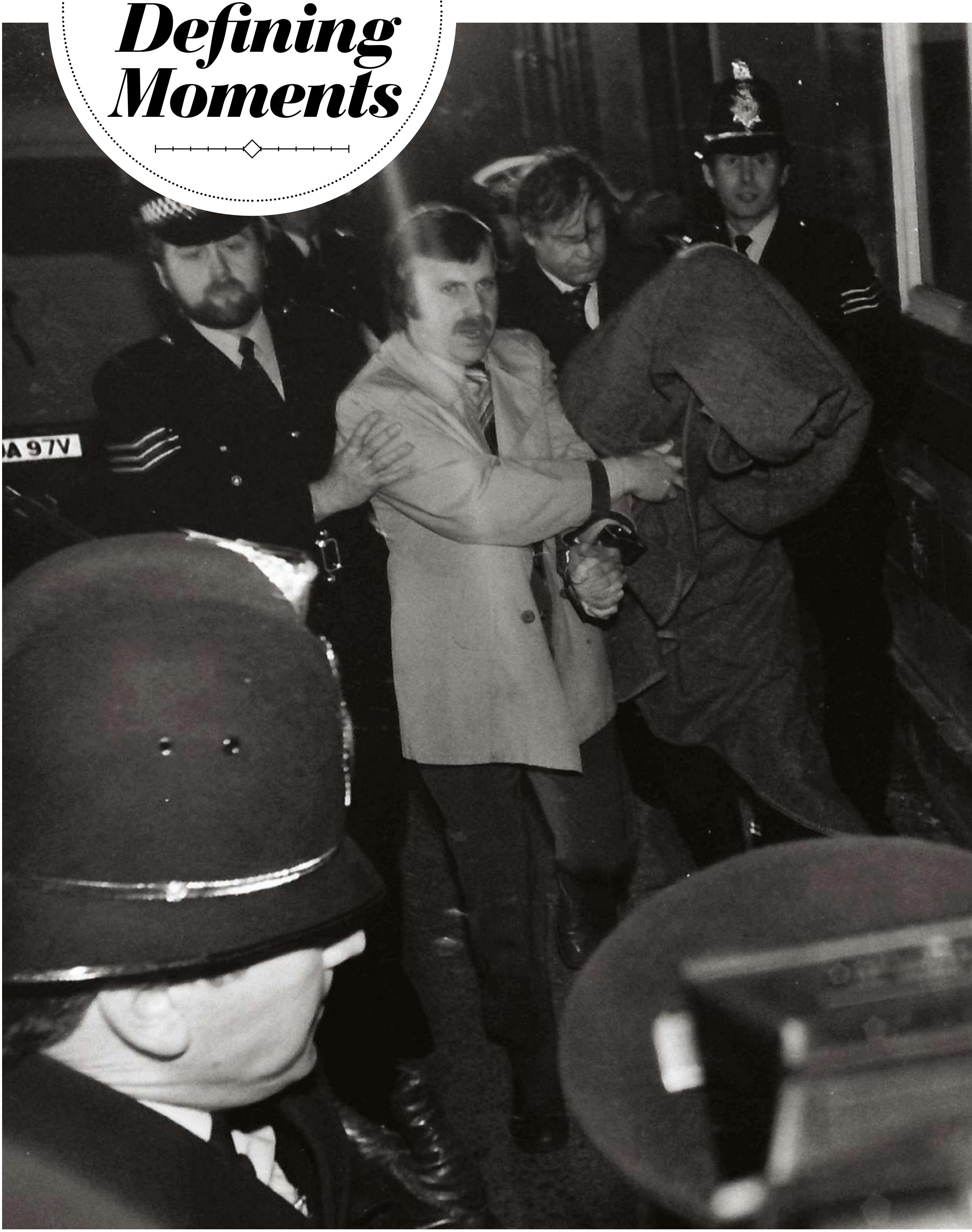
Persia's God-King

How the ancient Iranian emperor overcame revolt and intrigue to dominate West Asia

Defining Moments



© Alamy

6 January 1981

YORKSHIRE RIPPER FACES JUSTICE

Peter Sutcliffe was arrested in Sheffield after being found in a car with false number plates. He drew suspicion from the police as his appearance matched descriptions of the Yorkshire Ripper, the serial killer who had been terrorising the English county for years. Sutcliffe confessed to being the Ripper while in custody and was later found guilty of 13 murders. This photo shows Sutcliffe, his head covered, being taken to court for his first appearance, four days after his arrest.

© Alamy

7 January 1999

BILL CLINTON IMPEACHMENT TRIAL BEGINS

In Washington DC, all 100 senators were sworn in as jurors at the beginning of the impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton. Clinton, at the time only the second US President to be impeached, after Andrew Johnson in 1868, had been impeached for allegedly lying under oath and the obstruction of justice with regards to his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, a White House intern. Clinton was acquitted and remained as president.

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ALL ABOUT POLAND

Untangle the complex history of a nation that was a medieval power, was erased from the map, then rose again

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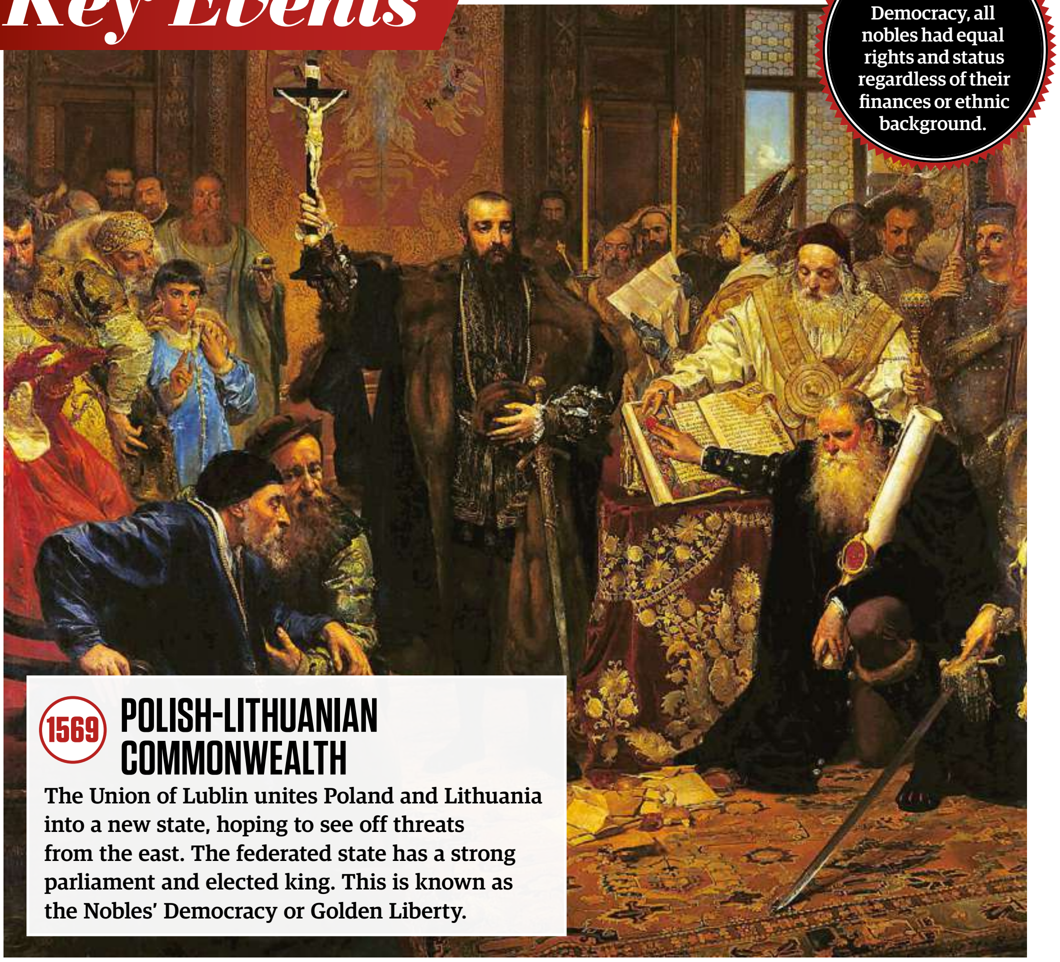
Main image: © Getty Images

Written by Jonathan Gordon, Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth, Josh West

Key Events



Under the Nobles' Democracy, all nobles had equal rights and status regardless of their finances or ethnic background.

1569 POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH

The Union of Lublin unites Poland and Lithuania into a new state, hoping to see off threats from the east. The federated state has a strong parliament and elected king. This is known as the Nobles' Democracy or Golden Liberty.

1939 NAZI INVASION

Germany invades Poland from the west on 1 September 1939, marking the start of World War II. Meanwhile, Soviet forces move in from the east. After heavy German shelling, Warsaw surrenders before the end of the month.

KINGDOM OF POLAND 1025

Known as 'The Brave', the Duke of Poland proclaims a new Kingdom of Poland, becoming its first king. His new state establishes itself as a power in Europe.

DUCHY OF WARSAW 1807

Following Polish assistance in his war against Prussia, Napoleon announces the new Duchy of Warsaw to gather further support for his cause, but it is absorbed by Russia once more in 1813.

JANUARY UPRISING 1863

Once again, young Polish soldiers lead a rebellion against Russian rule after new attempts at conscription. The uprising lasts until 1864, when the last organisers are captured and executed.

1569 1772 1795

ENLIGHTENMENT POLITICS 1791

A new constitution is approved along Enlightenment lines of reason and law. Royal power increases, but education and law are liberalised. However, the partition powers intervene, further dividing Poland in 1792.

NOVEMBER UPRISING 1830

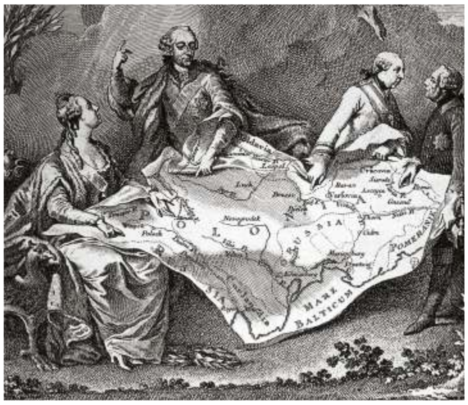
Polish infantry rise up in Warsaw against Russian rule, including an attempt to kill the emperor's brother, Grand Duke Constantine. The rebellion lasts until the following October, when it is finally defeated.

POLAND REBORN 1918

As part of the post-Great War negotiations for peace, an independent Poland is included on the agenda. Józef Piłsudski, commander in chief of the Polish Legions, is made chief of state for the new regime.

1772 KINGDOM DIVIDED

Following internal conflicts in Poland and the intervention of neighbouring powers to supposedly restore order, the first in a series of partitions of the country is agreed by Russia, Prussia and Austria. They absorb roughly half of Poland's population into their own kingdoms.

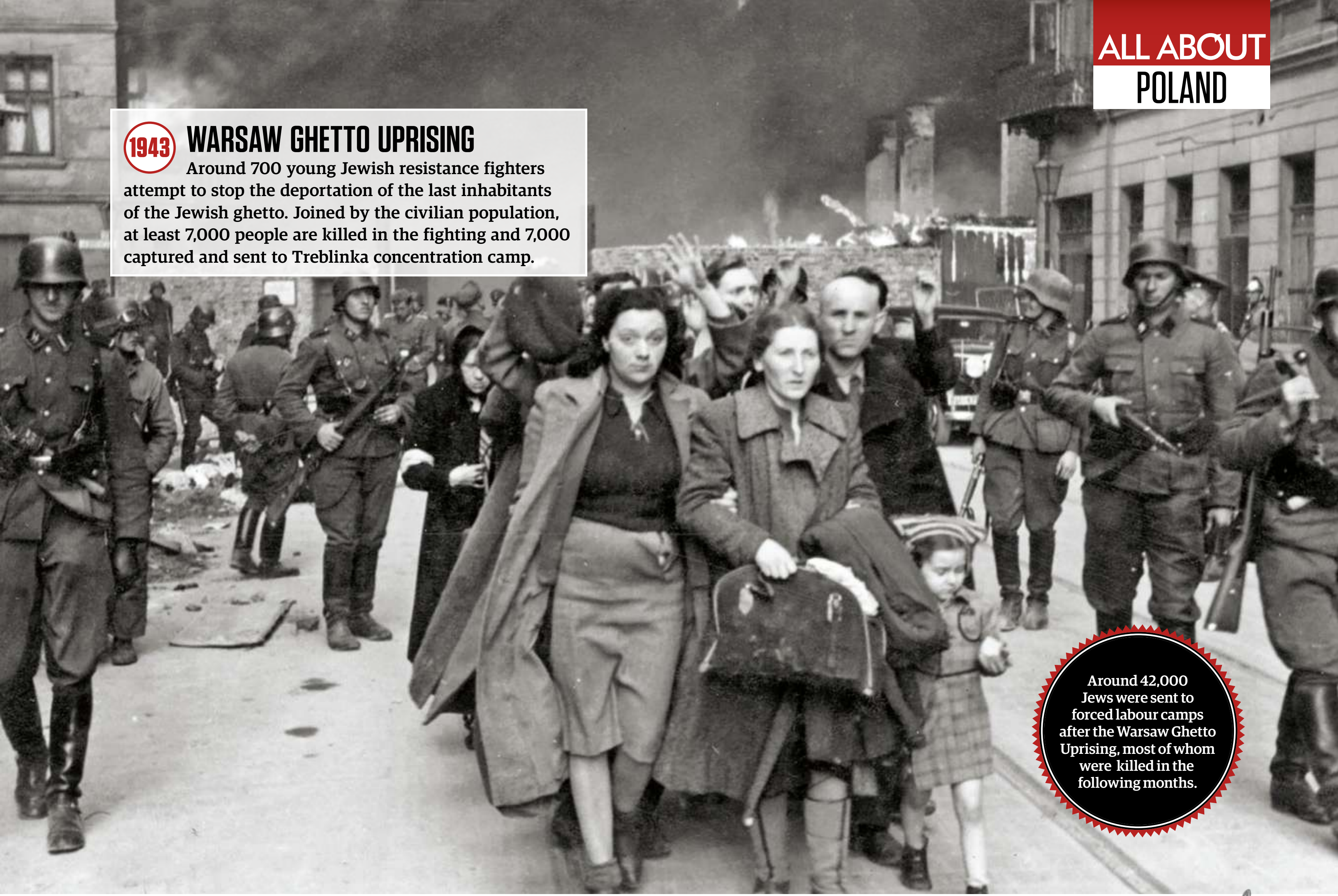


1795 A COUNTRY ERASED

Following the Second Partition of Poland a national uprising is led by Tadeusz Kościuszko in 1794. Russia and Prussia crush the resistance and open new negotiations with Austria to divide up what remains of the country. Poland is effectively wiped off the map.

MER BALTIQUE
POLOGNE

The complete loss of Polish independence for 123 years saw large immigrant populations develop around Europe, from which grew vibrant cultures.



1943

WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

Around 700 young Jewish resistance fighters attempt to stop the deportation of the last inhabitants of the Jewish ghetto. Joined by the civilian population, at least 7,000 people are killed in the fighting and 7,000 captured and sent to Treblinka concentration camp.

Around 42,000 Jews were sent to forced labour camps after the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, most of whom were killed in the following months.

KATYN MASSACRE 1940

20,000 Polish officials and military officers are rounded up by the Red Army and executed near Katyn, Russia. In 1992, it is finally confirmed it was on the orders of the Politburo and NKVD.

GERMANY EXPELLED
1945

The Red Army captures a decimated Warsaw in January, forcing Germany out of Poland by March. The Potsdam Conference draws new borders for the country.

WARSAW PACT 1955

A collective defence treaty, the Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance, is signed by Poland, the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary and Romania.

WAFFENBRÜDERSCHAFT
25 JAHRE WARSCHAUER VERTRAG

1939 1943 1989 2004

WARSAW UPRISING 1944

The Polish Home Army, the underground resistance during WWII, attempts to take Warsaw from Germany. At first successful, but lacking outside support it is ultimately crushed.

SOVIET CONTROL 1947

Poland becomes a Communist People's Republic following elections overseen by the Soviet Union. Bolesław Bierut, a Stalinist supporter, becomes president.

POLAND JOINS NATO
1999

Having been invited to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the mid-90s, Poland signs up in March 1999, aligning it with the western powers.

1989

FREE ELECTIONS

The communists are defeated in elections with the independent labour union turned political movement, Solidarity, winning in a landslide. It forms a new coalition government with Tadeusz Mazowiecki becoming prime minister. A year later, Solidarity founder Lech Wałęsa is elected president.

2004

POLAND JOINS THE EU

Following a national referendum and the signing of the Accession Treaty in Athens the previous year, Poland formally joins the European Union as a member state. It marks another significant milestone in its move away from its Eastern Bloc past and growing ties with Western Europe.

All images © Alamy

WAWEL CASTLE

Kraków, Poland

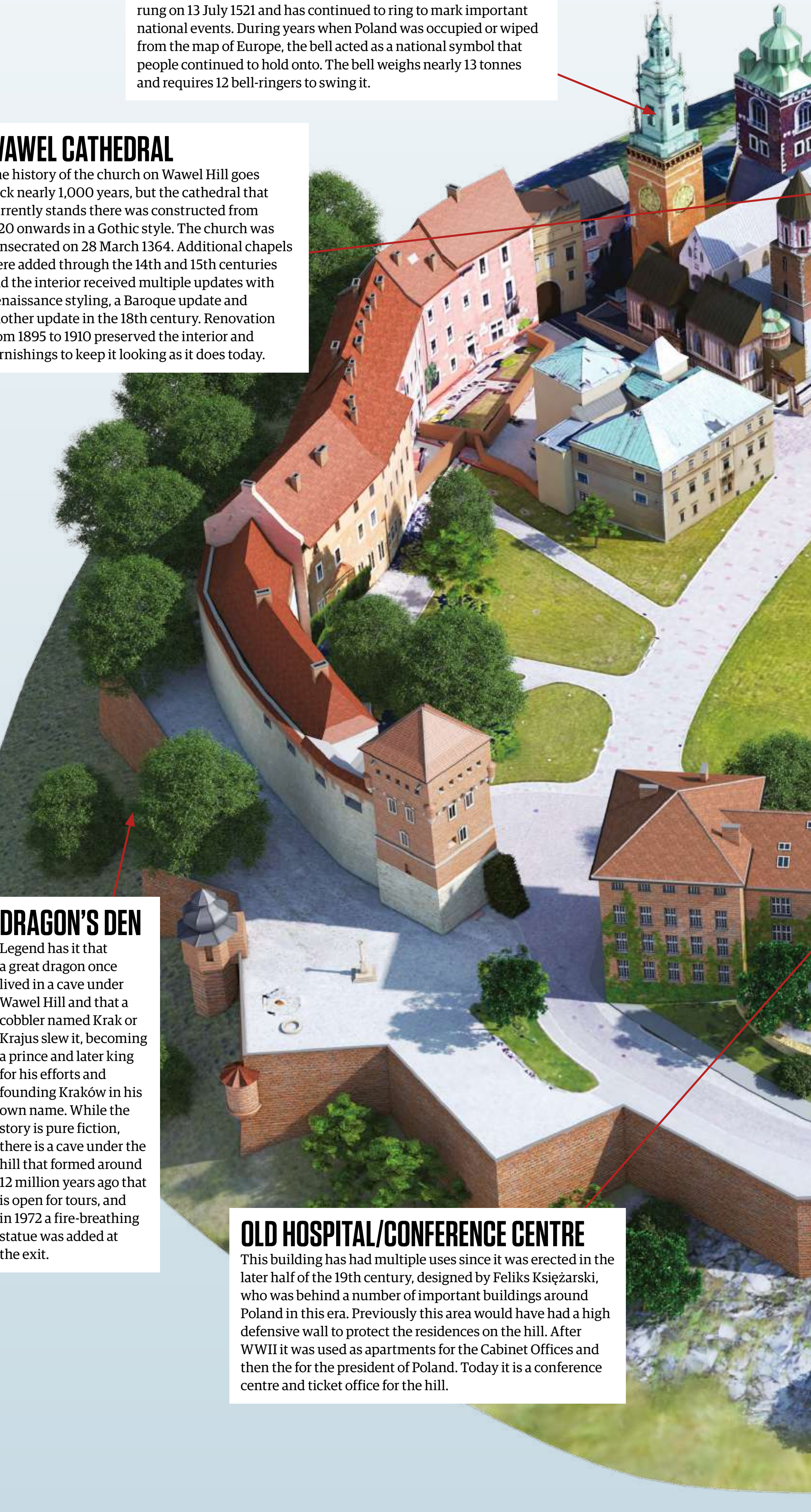
13th century – Present

The history of Wawel Hill and the castle that sits on it is as complex and changing as the nation of Poland itself. Over the centuries it has housed kings, governments and occupying forces in Kraków. Today it is a major tourist attraction for the city, showcasing art and architecture from several important periods in Poland's history.

The hill in itself is an interesting landmark, standing 228 metres above sea level next to the Vistula River that runs from the Baltic Sea, through Warsaw and down to the south. Long before any major structures were built on the hill, there is evidence of it being an important safe haven for locals looking for a strong defendable position, and medieval folklore claims that a dragon once lived beneath it.

From the 9th century the Wiślanie tribe occupied the hill before the tribes were united to form a new state. The first ruler of Poland, Mieszko I, made Wawel Hill one of his residences, which was then passed down to his successors. As a result, the first Romanesque religious buildings began to be built on the hill, followed by political buildings from the reign of Casimir the Restorer.

Wawel Castle as we see it today began to come together under the reigns of Alexander and Sigismund I the Old as they began construction of a new palace, replacing a previous Gothic building with the Renaissance style accommodation that we see now. They were both greatly influenced by the artistic movement that was coming out of Italy and were among the first to adopt it in their home countries, with the palace being completed in 1540. While many elements were destroyed, demolished and then rebuilt over the years, the hill still contains a mixed selection of elements from each of its inhabitants.



SIGISMUND BELL

In Sigismund Tower is the largest of five bells, known originally as the magna campana regia (royal big bell) and now as Sigismund Bell. It was cast in Kraków in 1520 by Hans Behem. It was first rung on 13 July 1521 and has continued to ring to mark important national events. During years when Poland was occupied or wiped from the map of Europe, the bell acted as a national symbol that people continued to hold onto. The bell weighs nearly 13 tonnes and requires 12 bell-ringers to swing it.

WAWEL CATHEDRAL

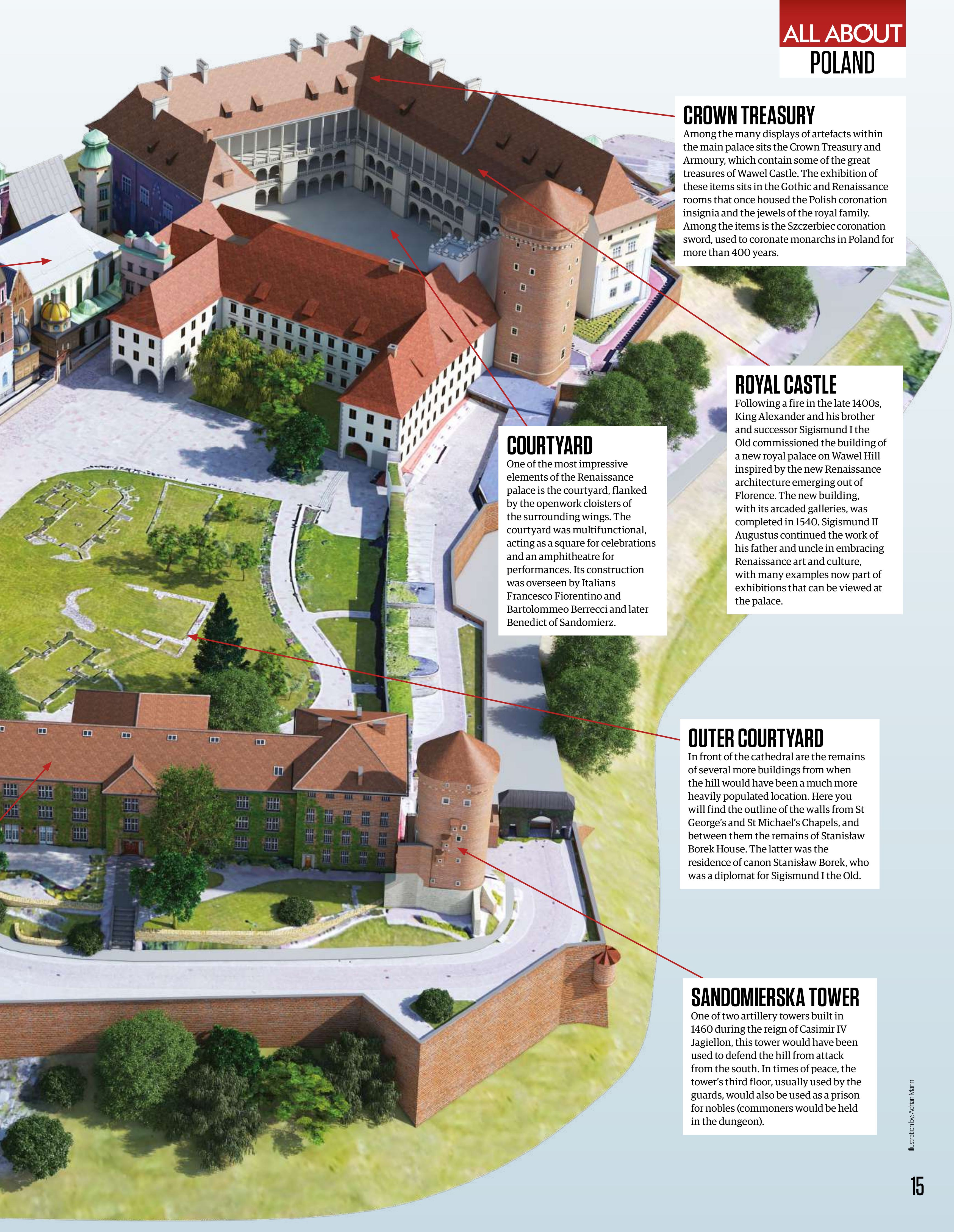
The history of the church on Wawel Hill goes back nearly 1,000 years, but the cathedral that currently stands there was constructed from 1320 onwards in a Gothic style. The church was consecrated on 28 March 1364. Additional chapels were added through the 14th and 15th centuries and the interior received multiple updates with Renaissance styling, a Baroque update and another update in the 18th century. Renovation from 1895 to 1910 preserved the interior and furnishings to keep it looking as it does today.

DRAGON'S DEN

Legend has it that a great dragon once lived in a cave under Wawel Hill and that a cobbler named Krak or Krajus slew it, becoming a prince and later king for his efforts and founding Kraków in his own name. While the story is pure fiction, there is a cave under the hill that formed around 12 million years ago that is open for tours, and in 1972 a fire-breathing statue was added at the exit.

OLD HOSPITAL/CONFERENCE CENTRE

This building has had multiple uses since it was erected in the later half of the 19th century, designed by Feliks Księżarski, who was behind a number of important buildings around Poland in this era. Previously this area would have had a high defensive wall to protect the residences on the hill. After WWII it was used as apartments for the Cabinet Offices and then the for the president of Poland. Today it is a conference centre and ticket office for the hill.



CROWN TREASURY

Among the many displays of artefacts within the main palace sits the Crown Treasury and Armoury, which contain some of the great treasures of Wawel Castle. The exhibition of these items sits in the Gothic and Renaissance rooms that once housed the Polish coronation insignia and the jewels of the royal family. Among the items is the Szczerbiec coronation sword, used to coronate monarchs in Poland for more than 400 years.

ROYAL CASTLE

Following a fire in the late 1400s, King Alexander and his brother and successor Sigismund I the Old commissioned the building of a new royal palace on Wawel Hill inspired by the new Renaissance architecture emerging out of Florence. The new building, with its arcaded galleries, was completed in 1540. Sigismund II Augustus continued the work of his father and uncle in embracing Renaissance art and culture, with many examples now part of exhibitions that can be viewed at the palace.

COURTYARD

One of the most impressive elements of the Renaissance palace is the courtyard, flanked by the openwork cloisters of the surrounding wings. The courtyard was multifunctional, acting as a square for celebrations and an amphitheatre for performances. Its construction was overseen by Italians Francesco Fiorentino and Bartolommeo Berrecci and later Benedict of Sandomierz.

OUTER COURTYARD

In front of the cathedral are the remains of several more buildings from when the hill would have been a much more heavily populated location. Here you will find the outline of the walls from St George's and St Michael's Chapels, and between them the remains of Stanisław Borek House. The latter was the residence of canon Stanisław Borek, who was a diplomat for Sigismund I the Old.

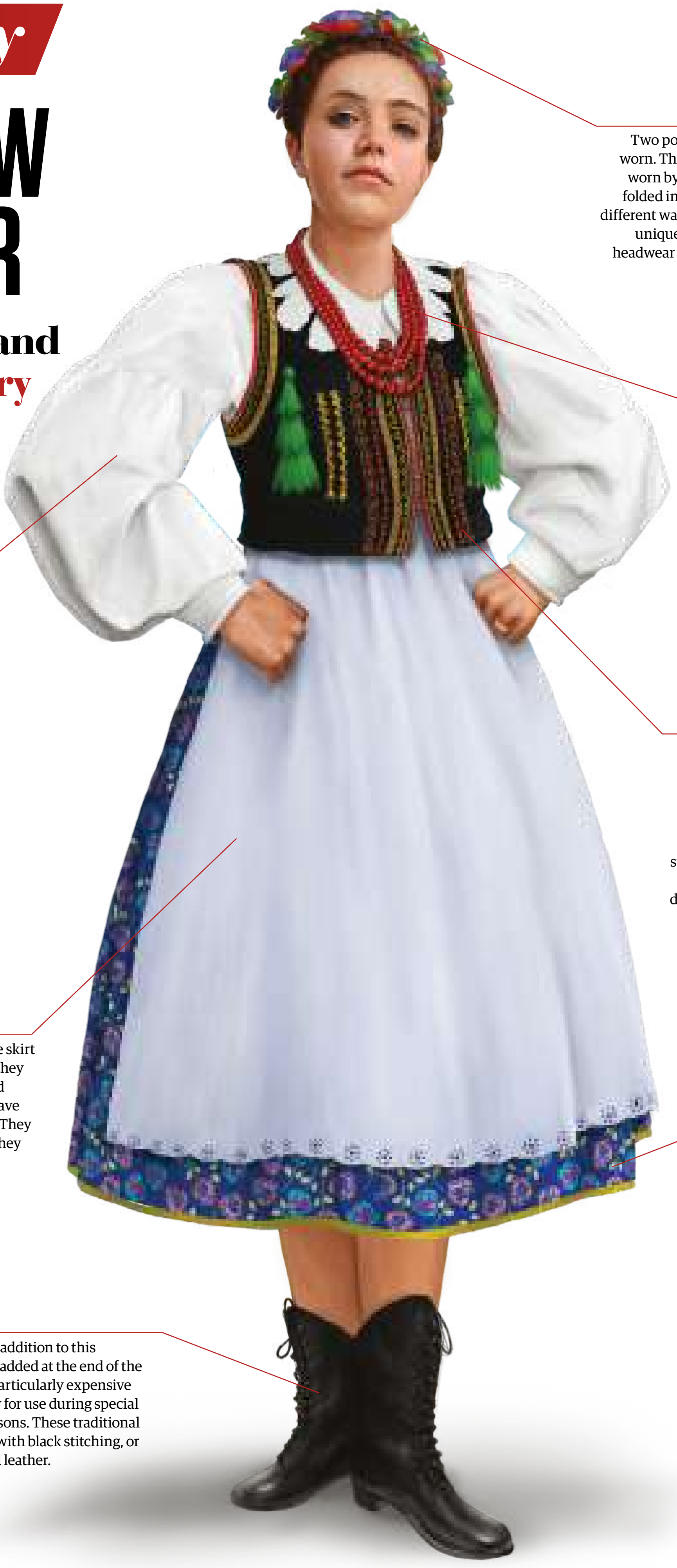
SANDOMIERSKA TOWER

One of two artillery towers built in 1460 during the reign of Casimir IV Jagiellon, this tower would have been used to defend the hill from attack from the south. In times of peace, the tower's third floor, usually used by the guards, would also be used as a prison for nobles (commoners would be held in the dungeon).

Illustration by: Adrian Mann

KRAKÓW DANCER

Kraków, Poland
c.18th century – present



HEADWEAR

Two possible forms of headwear could be worn. The first was a handkerchief, usually worn by married women, which would be folded into a form of cap. There were many different ways to tie the handkerchief, usually unique to each village. The other form of headwear was an ornate flower cap, worn by brides and their bridesmaids.

KORALE

These string necklaces of coral beads were a favourite part of the costume. Over time, coral beads were replaced with substitutes such as glass due to their high price. Later, some substitutes were coloured red and made from a mixture of starch and resin, while modern versions are made from polystyrene.

BLOUSE

These shirts would be hand-sewn and created from factory-produced white cotton fabric. Although earlier blouses had ruffs, more contemporary versions introduced at the end of the 19th century were without collars. Instead they were decorated with satin stitching. However, some villages' costumes have blouses with buttons and collars.

BODICE

The traditional costume of Kraków is the most recognisable of all the Polish regional costumes and became the national costume. Its most visually striking element is the bodice or corset, which is ornately decorated with floral patterns and beads or sequins.

ZAPASKA

This apron would cover the front of the skirt and could be made of woollen fabric. They were usually white and were decorated with floral patterns. Some examples have their edges decorated with white lace. They would often be shorter than the skirt they were covering.

SKIRT

The skirts were made from a form of fabric known as 'tibet', made from the wool of Tibetan sheep or goats. Sometimes several dresses were worn at once, on top of each other. Although many different patterns were worn, one of the most popular was dark green with red roses.

BOOTS

Boots were a relatively late addition to this traditional costume, being added at the end of the 18th century. Shoes were particularly expensive and were saved exclusively for use during special occasions or the colder seasons. These traditional shoes would be decorated with black stitching, or in some cases a piece of red leather.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

POLAND'S EXCALIBUR

This 'jagged sword' was used to crown the kings of Poland

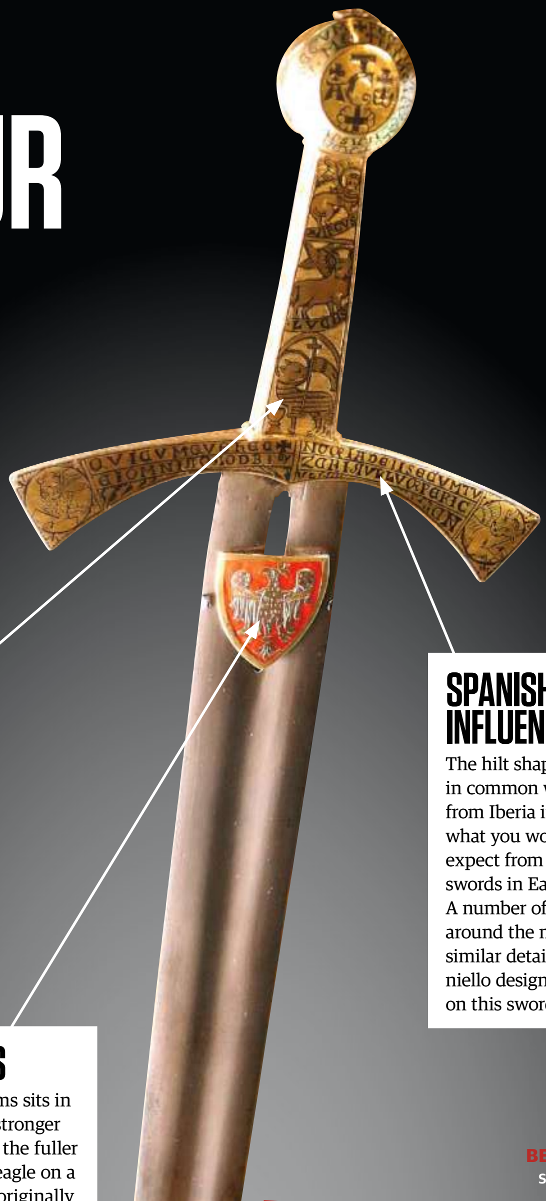
Poland, 13th – 18th century

This remarkable medieval sword is one of Poland's great national treasures, although it has frequently been at risk of being lost and for some time its provenance was questioned. The Szczerbiec, which means jagged sword, also comes with a medieval legend for its origin and was used in the coronation ceremonies of the kings of Poland from Władysław I Łokietek in 1320 to Stanisław August Poniatowski in 1764.

Legend has it that the weapon belonged to the first Polish king, Bolesław the Brave, who notched it striking the Golden Gate of Kyiv, which is likely how it earned the name jagged sword. Its true origin has been hotly debated, but it's now believed that it was first owned by Duke of Greater Poland, Bolesław the Pious, and handed down to his son-in-law Duke Władysław Łokietek, who used it as part of his coronation ceremony when he became king in 1320.

Following the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795, many historic treasures were taken by the Prussians and melted down. The sword survived, but was in the possession of private collectors for many years before reappearing in the Hermitage Museum of Leningrad. The USSR returned Poland's treasures from 1920, becoming part of the Wawel museum collection, but in 1939 the sword and other artefacts of national significance were sent away again to prevent them from being taken during the Nazi invasion. The sword resided in Canada until 1961, when it returned to Poland.

Today the Szczerbiec is back in its original home of Wawel Castle in Kraków, in a gothic chamber built in the 14th century called the Jadwiga and Jagiello Room. Given the convoluted history of the sword, there had been concern that it was a 19th century replica, but recent examination, including the use of X-ray, has confirmed its authenticity and helped to date it around 1250, which lines up with Duke Bolesław, who died in 1279.



RELIGIOUS IMAGERY

The grip, pommel and quillon of the sword are covered in religious imagery and a mixture of Latin and Hebrew script. Icons include the Lamb of God and the four Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This is all set on gold plates over silver.

SPANISH INFLUENCE

The hilt shape has more in common with designs from Iberia in this era than what you would typically expect from medieval swords in Eastern Europe. A number of swords from around the mid-1200s have similar detailing and subtle niello designs like the ones on this sword.

POLISH ARMS

The Polish coat of arms sits in a notch in the forte (stronger part) of the sword, in the fuller (groove). This white eagle on a red background was originally part of the sword's scabbard, but that was lost to rust, according to records from 1739.

MAKING AND DATING

An examination of the sword revealed that it was made of bloomery steel and was quenched and tempered below the hilt. Signs of a later manufacturing process, such as pattern welding or composite structures, were not present, which would be giveaways it was made later.

BELOW The legend of the sword claims it belonged to Bolesław the Brave

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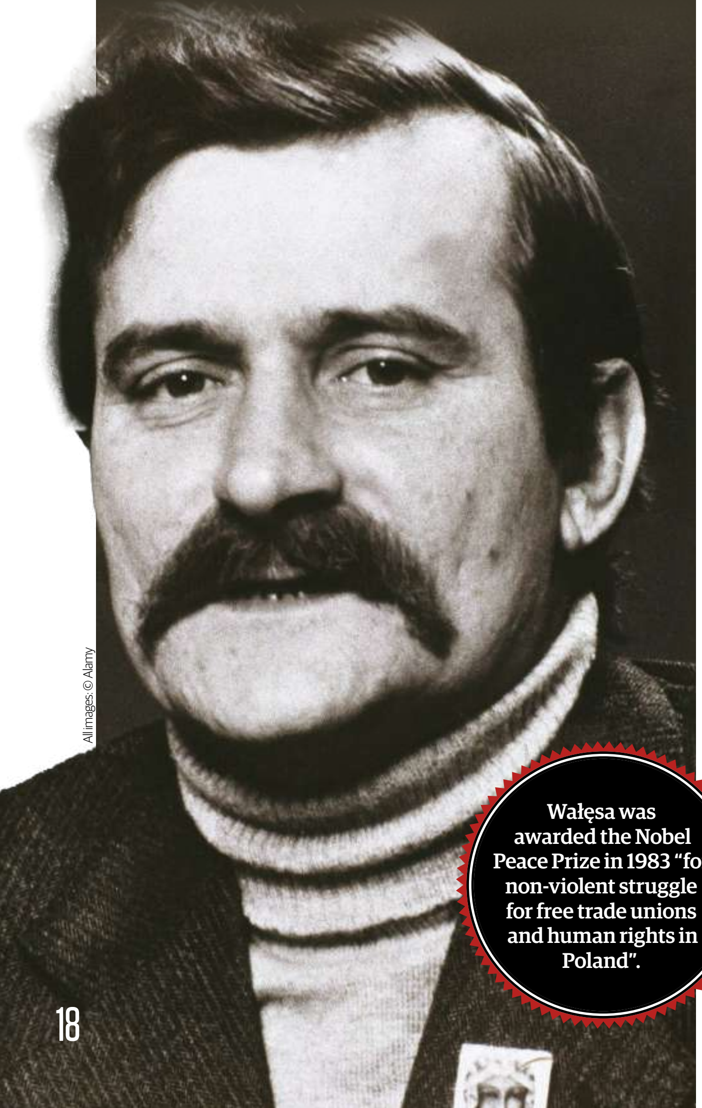
POLITICIANS, PIONEERS AND REBELS

Meet some of Poland's most famous, influential and accomplished historical figures

Lech Wałesa

President, 1943 – present

A shipyard worker in Gdansk, Lech Wałęsa was an anti-communist activist who played a vital role in organising shipyard strikes across Poland. He was arrested for his activism in 1976 but continued to organise protests, becoming the leader of the trade union Solidarity. The 1980 shipyard strikes prompted strikes all over the country, and Wałęsa was arrested and eventually released under government surveillance. Supported by Pope John Paul II, the Solidarity movement continued to make waves. In 1989, Solidarity formed a coalition government in Poland after protests forced the Polish communist regime to hold free elections. Wałęsa was elected as President of Poland in 1990.



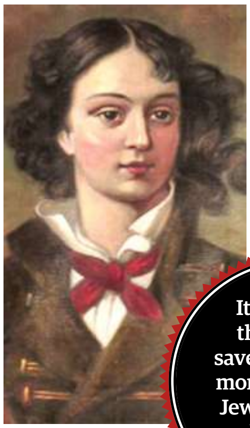
Wałęsa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983 "for non-violent struggle for free trade unions and human rights in Poland".

All images: © Alamy

EMILIA PLATER

REVOLUTIONARY, 1806-31

Born in Lithuania, Emilia Plater was a member of a Polish-Lithuanian noble family. She was raised with patriotic Polish values and when the November Uprising began in 1830, Plater cut her hair, wore a uniform and raised an army to oppose the rule of the Russian tsar in the region. She was made a captain of the Polish-Lithuanian forces but died from illness before the end of the Uprising. Plater is a national heroine in Poland and Lithuania.



MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE

SCIENTIST, 1867 – 1934

Famous for her research into radioactivity, Marie Skłodowska-Curie was a Polish scientist who was the first person and the only woman to have won the Nobel Prize twice. Alongside her husband, Pierre, whom she met in Paris while studying at the Sorbonne, Curie discovered radium and polonium (named after her home country). Her research meant that X-rays could take more accurate pictures, and she made mobile X-ray units that were used on battlefields during WWI.

It's believed that Sendler saved the lives of more than 2,500 Jewish children during the Holocaust.

Irena Sendler

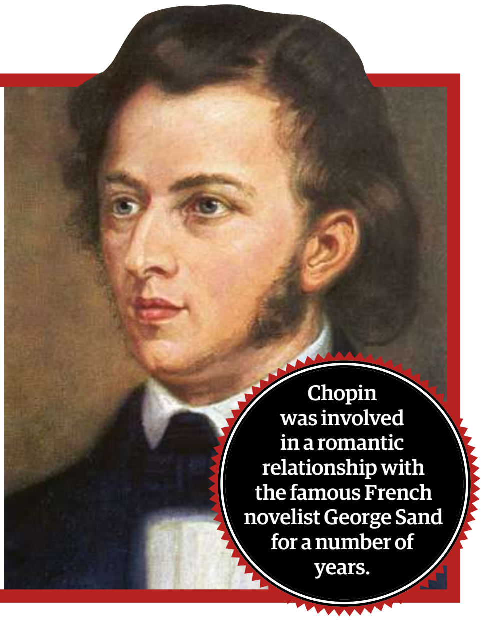
Social worker, 1910 – 2008

Irena Sendler was a social worker who grew up and worked in Warsaw. When Poland was invaded by Germany in September 1939, Warsaw's Jewish citizens were segregated into a ghetto. Sendler used her position to arrange for Jewish children to be smuggled out of the ghetto to safety, and later became the head of the children's section of Żegota, an underground Council for Aid to Jews. Arrested by the Gestapo in 1943, Sendler was beaten and sentenced to death but escaped before she could be executed. She continued to operate under the radar, saving children from the Holocaust that killed millions of Jews.

Frédéric Chopin

Composer, 1810-49

Introduced to music by his mother, Frédéric Chopin was composing his own music by the age of six. His parents hired a tutor for the young Chopin, and by 1818 he was performing his own music. He studied at the Warsaw Conservatory of Music and began to perform across Europe, mixing with composers of the era like Felix Mendelssohn and Franz Liszt. Chopin eventually settled in Paris for most of the rest of his life and by the time of his death was renowned as a skilled pianist. He is considered to be one of the most influential composers of all time.

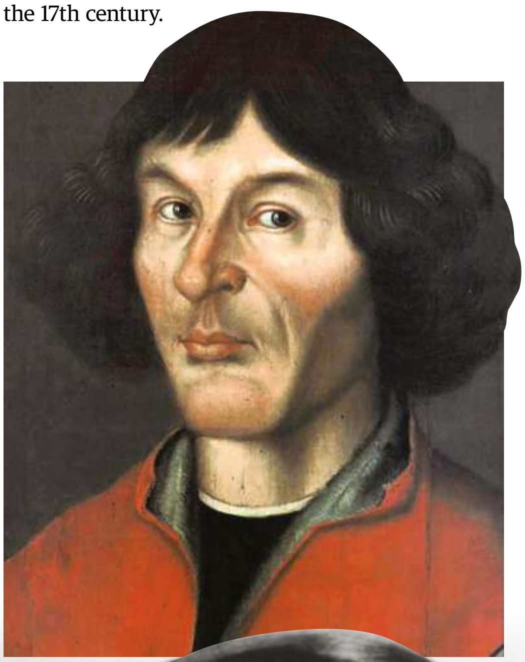


Chopin was involved in a romantic relationship with the famous French novelist George Sand for a number of years.

NICOLAUS COPERNICUS

POLYMATH, 1473 – 1543

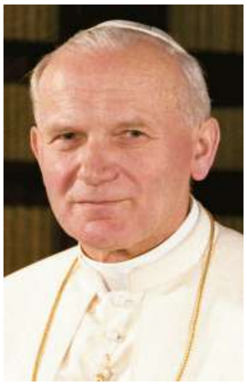
Born in Toruń, Nicolaus Copernicus was an astronomer and mathematician credited with proposing that the solar system was heliocentric at a time when scientists believed that Earth was at the centre. He studied at the universities of Kraków, Bologna, Padua and Ferrara and became a canon in the Catholic Church. However, he never took holy orders to become a priest and pursued his interest in astronomy. Copernicus was largely unknown during his lifetime, and his heliocentric theory was published posthumously to much scrutiny from religious figures, who called it heretical. Galileo and Johannes Kepler popularised the theory in the 17th century.



WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA

POET, 1923 – 2012

Wisława Szymborska won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1996 “for poetry that with ironic precision allows the historical and biological context to come to light in fragments of human reality.” She spent most of her life in Kraków and through her poetry addressed political and personal themes. In her earlier life, she observed the socialist ideology of Poland of the time, but later renounced her socialist-supporting work and became a proponent for free speech.



JOHN PAUL II

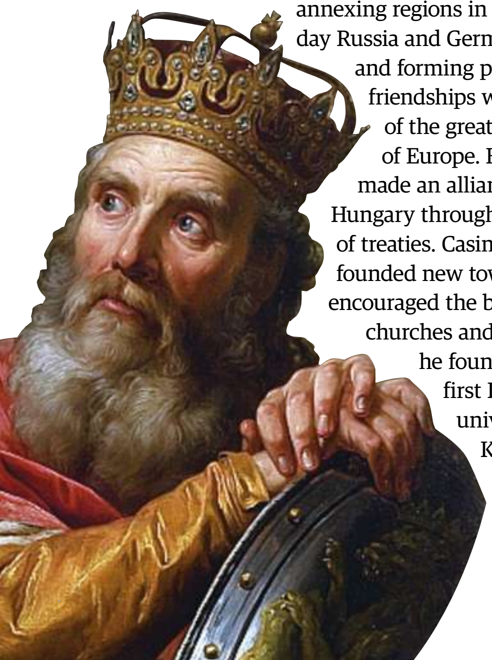
POPE, 1920 - 2005

Born in the town of Wadowice, Karol Józef Wojtyła was made Pope John Paul II in 1978. As pope, his tenure was conservative but defined by his firm stance against communism, capital punishment and war, and he was an advocate for ending communism in Europe. He issued an apology on behalf of the Catholic Church for its actions during World War II and survived two assassination attempts, suffering a gunshot wound in the first attempt.

CASIMIR III

KING, 1310-1370

Also known as Casimir the Great, King Casimir III of Poland was famed for his diplomacy. During his prosperous reign, he expanded Poland through annexing regions in modern-day Russia and Germany and forming political friendships with many of the great dynasties of Europe. He also made an alliance with Hungary through a series of treaties. Casimir founded new towns, encouraged the building of churches and in 1364 he founded the first Polish university, in Kraków.



Helena Rubinstein

Entrepreneur,
1870 – 1965

Helena Rubinstein was born in Kraków to Jewish parents, and studied medical sciences at university in Switzerland for a short time. Rubinstein moved to Australia in the 1890s and used her scientific expertise to make face creams and beauty products, which she began to sell. She later returned to Europe to pursue an education in dermatology and in 1908 she opened her first salon, in London. Rubinstein opened subsequent salons in Paris and across America and became one of the most famous businesswomen in the world. She is credited as being the first self-made female millionaire.

JEWISH LIFE IN POLAND

Professor Sarah Ellen Zarrow on why Jewish Poles thrived, the challenges they faced and life just before World War II

Sarah Ellen Zarrow is associate professor of History at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, and holds the Endowed Professorship in Jewish History. Her research focuses on Jewish life in Eastern Europe, particularly in Poland, with her current focus on Jewish life in the interwar period.

How far back can we trace a Jewish community in Poland?

The Jewish community in what is today Poland, which over time had slightly different borders, we can date back to about the 12th century. Some historians date it a little bit earlier, but it seems like there weren't really huge communities before the 12th century. There's the historical narrative about how the Jews arrived in Poland and it has to do with their perceived economic value to the rulers and also moving eastward, escaping some of the pogroms that were partially related to the Crusades in German lands. There are also these communal myths about these 12th-century migrations. There's the legend of 'Po-lin', for example, which said that when the Jews entered Polish lands they found that the trees and the birds were all whispering 'po-lin', which sounds like Poland, but in Hebrew means 'rest here'. In other versions of the story there are pages of [Jewish religious text] *Talmud* that are hanging from the trees. So there are these myths, not just that there are these benevolent rulers who welcomed the Jews for economic purposes, but also that the landscape itself, the natural environment, is very hospitable to Jews and that Jewish texts are already part of the landscape when they arrive.

Who are some prominent Jewish figures in Polish history we should know about?

The issue with the partitions makes it tricky. I was going to mention someone like Ludwik Zamenhof, who is the inventor of Esperanto. He was born in the Pale of Settlement, in Białystok, so is he Polish? It's a little bit hard to say, but I would mention his name as a dreamer and someone who did have a practical effect, and whose writing and work illustrates some of the concerns of Jews in this territory. He's trying to find this universal language to promote peace among peoples. I would be remiss if I didn't mention somebody like Berek Joselewicz, who was a hero of the Kościuszko Uprising in 1794, which immediately precedes the very last partition of Poland and is the last gasp of political solidarity. He was seen in his own time, but also later, especially in the 1920s, as a model Polish Jew. There are many clubs named after him, youth organisations, and streets. Also, there are religious figures like Rabbi Meir Shapiro who founded the Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva and was the originator of the system of reading one page of *Talmud* every day, which is called Daf Yomi. There are writers and cultural activists like Rachela Auerbach who was writing in both Polish and Yiddish, who was active in the underground Warsaw Ghetto archive and the Oyneg Shabbos archive and writes a lot post-war as well.

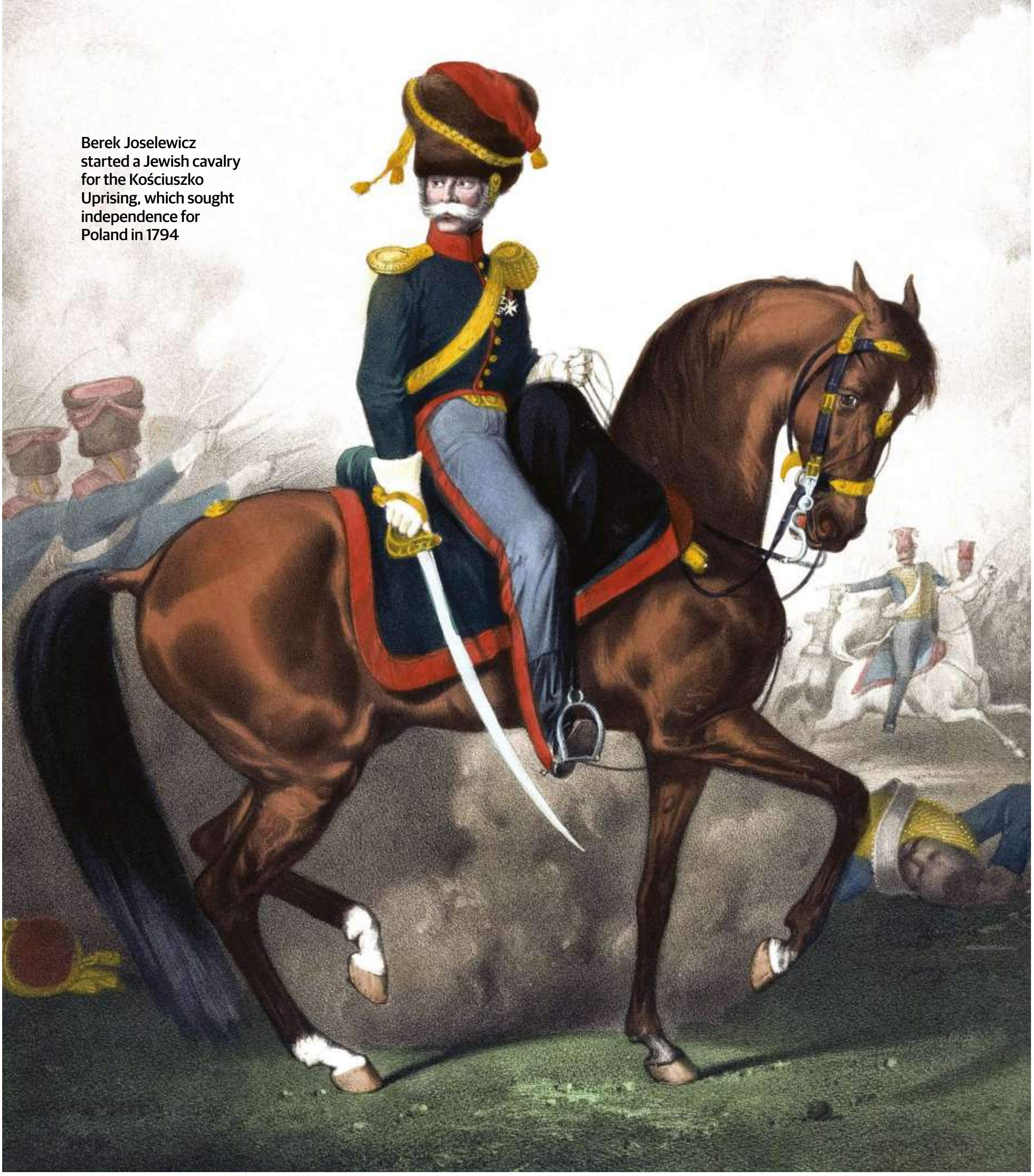
How frequently would pogroms against the Jewish community rise up?

Again, because of the partitions, everything becomes a little bit complicated. For example, we really see waves of pogroms in Tsarist Russia originating in the early 1880s. So, the Polish Partition, the Pale of Settlement that belongs to Tsarist Russia, also Warsaw, which at that time is nominally a semi-independent state but is actually under tsarist control; we do see pogroms in Warsaw in 1881 and we also see pogroms in 1905 and 1906, connected with the 1905 Russian Revolution. Almost all of these are connected

LEFT
Ludwik Zamenhof was the inventor of Esperanto, intended as a universal language

RIGHT
The old Jewish district of Krakow, one of many such communal centres scattered throughout Polish cities

Photo courtesy of: Sophia Pike Betz



Berek Joselewicz started a Jewish cavalry for the Kościuszko Uprising, which sought independence for Poland in 1794

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with broader political events. There's a popular conception of pogroms as this mob violence that originates out of nowhere and townspeople decide 'let's have a pogrom', and we really don't see evidence of that in most places. I'm not sure if that comes from *Fiddler On The Roof* or some other place.

In 1648, the Khmelnytsky Massacre occurs, which was the largest death toll of Jews in Eastern Europe up until the Holocaust. And then in the 1760s, when the Council of the Four Lands [a Jewish parliament within Poland] dissolves and it's the beginning of the end of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, we do see examples of violence against Jews that seems to arise out of these political circumstances. And that sounds like a lot, but I also think that mob violence, especially outside of a context of general political unrest, was still less frequent than some might think.

How was the Jewish community in Poland doing up to 1939?

This is a question that's so interesting to me and it's at the heart of my research. Jews were about ten percent of the Polish population, but they were often a large minority, even an incredibly strong minority, in towns and in some of the larger cities – 25-35 percent of the population. We have to think about Poland as a whole. There is real poverty, we have a worldwide depression, and that especially impacts the former Galicia and the east generally. Financial woes are huge and they don't just affect Jews, although certain policies have greater effects on Jews. We also see this cultural flowering of Yiddish press, Polish press, music and politics.

In my own research, I see how a lot of Jewish cultural projects were going full-steam in 1938 and 1939, and others are finding the same in religious and other spheres. There were anxieties about what was happening in Poland as well as what was happening in Nazi Germany just to the west, but Jews weren't living with the shadow of the Holocaust over their heads. I think this is one of the tough things about studying history is that we look backwards, but they were looking forwards. Sometimes it's hard to get those gazes to meet. I'm reading about these big capital projects underway in 1938 where they have big plans that they're going to build something by 1942, for example. We know that doesn't happen, but they were quite hopeful about it and I don't think it was an entirely naive hope.

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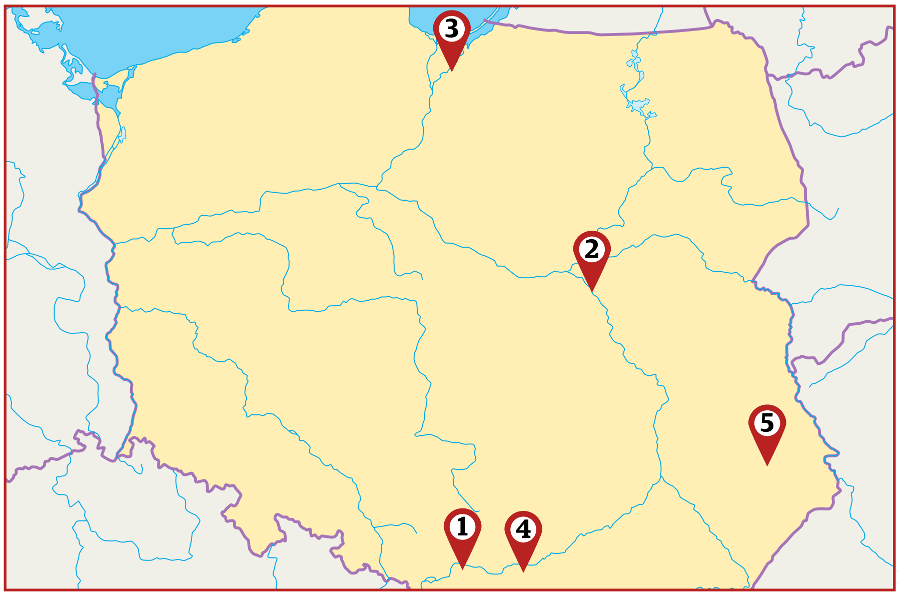
HISTORIC SITES OF POLAND

The places that illustrate Poland's rich history, from the Crusades to WWII



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1 AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

OŚWIĘCIM, LESSER POLAND VOIVODESHIP

The site of the worst atrocity in history, Auschwitz-Birkenau was the principle and largest of the extermination camps used by the Third Reich to carry out the 'Final Solution'. Built in 1939 by the SS as a concentration camp for Polish prisoners and then Soviet POWs, by 1942 it had become a complex of 40 concentration and extermination camps for Jews, homosexuals, gypsies and other minorities. Between 1942-44 an estimated 1.1 million people were murdered here, with the camp holding around 90,000 prisoners in 1944. The camp was liberated by Soviet troops on 27 January 1945, a day now commemorated as Holocaust Memorial Day.

Visitors to the site can still observe the barbed wire, gallows, gas chambers, crematoriums and infamous railway tracks. Inside the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (founded in 1947) are collections of personal items, including 40,000 pairs of shoes and 2,000 pieces of art made by the prisoners.

Open from 7.30am, closing times vary throughout the year. Entry is free but groups are required to book a guide.

ARBEIT MACHT FREI
HALT

The gate to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial, bearing the mantra "Work sets you free"

The main gate to Auschwitz II-Birkenau with the infamous railway tracks

2 WARSAW UPRISING MUSEUM

GRZYBOWSKA 79, WARSAW

Learn about WWII's biggest single uprising against the Nazis

The Warsaw Uprising Museum was originally established in 1983, but work was not begun until the late 1990s and the museum only opened in 2004. It is dedicated to the story of the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, an attempt by the Polish Underground State to drive the Nazi occupiers out of the capital. In the largest single resistance effort of WWII, between 1 August and 20 October, 50,000 fighters and partisans repeatedly failed to oust the German forces, while the surrounding Red Army watched on without providing support. During the brutal reprisal from the Nazis, around 250,000 civilians died in mass executions and 85 percent of the city was destroyed.

The museum depicts fighting and everyday life during the uprising, from beginning to end. Guests can relive the life of an insurgent in its sewers, and learn about the 'little insurgents' in a room dedicated to the children of the uprising. 800 displayed items include original weapons (both Polish and Nazi), love letters between insurgents and a full-size B-24 Liberator plane.

Open between 8am-8pm Monday to Friday (closed on Tuesdays) and between 10am-6pm on weekends. An adult ticket costs 20 Polish Zloty.

Malbork Castle as seen from the Nogat River

3 MALBORK CASTLE

MALBORK, POMERANIAN VOIVODESHIP

Built by the Teutonic Order of Knights in the late 12th century, Malbork Castle remains the largest castle in the world, four-times bigger than Windsor Castle in the UK. Beginning life as a fortified base for Teutonic knights fighting in the Baltic crusades, the castle became the international headquarters for the order in 1309, when Grand Master Siegfried von Feuchtwangen moved it from Venice to avoid the same persecution as the Templars. The 18-hectare site contains three separate castles, all built in brick, that once housed around 3,000 knights. UNESCO describes the castle as “straining between the extremes of sanctity and violence”.

In 1457, the site was sold to King Casimir IV of Poland and served as a Polish royal residence for over 300 years until the Partition of Poland in 1772. Following damage during WWII, the site was under constant renovation in the late 20th century. Since 1961, visitors have been able to explore this largest brick complex in Europe, with highlights including St Anne’s Chapel, the burial place of six Grand Masters, and the museum’s huge collection of amber items – a fossil resin mined at the castle since the 12th century. Guests can explore all three castles, venture along the ramparts, walk under the original portcullis and meet the new 'Iron Warriors' in the courtyard.

Open between 9am and 4pm every day, with an adult ticket costing 70 Polish Zloty.

4 WIELICZKA SALT MINE

WIELICZKA, LESSER POLAND VOIVODESHIP

Sculptures carved by miners in the Wieliczka Salt Mine

Salt mining began in Wieliczka in the early 13th century and continued for another 800 years right up until 2007. In that time, generations of miners created a labyrinth of passages and caverns reaching down 327m into the earth. The mine underwent a major expansion under King Casimir the Great in the 14th century, who granted it royal status and established its administration in the nearby Wieliczka Saltworks Castle.

It's far more than just a salt mine: the miners also carved chapels, decorative halls and even an underground lake. One chamber has been carved to look like wood, while the ornate St Kinga’s Chapel even has chandeliers made from salt crystals. Since the 19th century, tourists have been marvelling at the mine’s opulent carvings, including modern ones of notable visitors, with a 3.5km visitor route available today (though this is only two percent of the total mine). Advancements in mining technology are also on display, from a Saxon treadmill to one large enough for horses.

Open between 10am-5pm on weekdays and from 9am on weekends. An English tour is available every hour with adult tickets costing 109 Polish Zloty (77 Zloty for a tour in Polish).

5 THE OLD CITY OF ZAMOŚĆ

ZAMOŚĆ, LUBLIN VOIVODESHIP

Zamość was the brainchild of Italian architect Bernardo Morando as a Renaissance ‘ideal city’ in the late 16th century. Located on the trade route between Northern Europe and the Black Sea, its founder Jan Zamoysky imagined the city along the Renaissance principles of morality and tolerance through geometric town planning. UNESCO describes the 185-acre site as a “unique blend of Italian and Central European traditions”. Its solid fortress walls meant it survived several invasions and attacks (only falling in 1830) and leaves Zamość the best example of Renaissance ‘ideal’ architecture in the world.

The city is hexagonally designed, with two clearly delineated halves: the west for the nobility and Zamoysky Palace, and the east for the town proper. At the heart of the town proper are the beautifully colourful Salt Market Square, Water Market Square and the central Grand Market Square. Over 200 historical buildings remain perfectly intact, with tourists able to walk around the cathedral, arsenal, Zamoysky Palace and the remnants of the mighty Zamość fortress. But the treasure of the old city remains the Grand Market Square, with the towering Zamość City Hall and the surrounding iconic merchants' houses, including the Armenian tenements. These colourful houses contain a small museum of the old city, including a huge model of the old town of Zamość and even some mammoth bones.

The Old City is free for people to visit all year round.

The Grand Market Square of Zamość, with the City Hall and Armenian tenements

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XERXES I

PERSIA'S GOD-KING

How the ancient Iranian emperor overcame revolt and intrigue to dominate West Asia

Written by Murray Dahm

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Xerxes (the Greek spelling of his name), was the king of the Persian Empire from 486 to 465 BCE. He is remembered in western scholarship for his defeat by combined Greek forces during his invasion of Greece in 480 and 479 BCE. A quick look at his 20-year reign, however, tells us that his rule must have amounted to more than that. Unfortunately, the best surviving source for him remains Herodotus, the Greek historian from Halicarnassus, who wrote the history of the Persian Wars (from the Greek perspective). Xerxes is, therefore, the villain of the story, full of hubris (because of his eventual defeat) and reduced almost to a caricature of a bad ruler. Other contemporary, near-contemporary and later Greek writers (such as the dramatist Aeschylus in his play *The Persians* and the philosopher Plato) add to this picture.

> "Xerxes is the villain of Herodotus' story, full of hubris and reduced to a caricature of a bad ruler"

Yet Xerxes reigned for 15 years after his defeat in Greece and his rule was uninterrupted, so his loss, while momentous for the Greeks, was relatively unimportant in the context of the enormous Persian Empire. Xerxes still ruled over a vast region that stretched from India in the east to Europe in the west, from Egypt in the south to Azerbaijan in the north. Despite his defeat in Greece, he was a strong ruler who quashed revolts in Egypt and Babylon that had already started when he took the throne in 486 BCE. These had begun in the last years of Darius I and Xerxes put down both efficiently. The empire was, nonetheless, relatively stable under his tenure. He was also responsible for the construction (or at least the completion) of immense building complexes in both Susa and Persepolis.

BORN TO RULE

Xerxes was the fourth (or fifth) king of the Achaemenid Dynasty, the son of Darius I, the Great, and Atossa, the ▶

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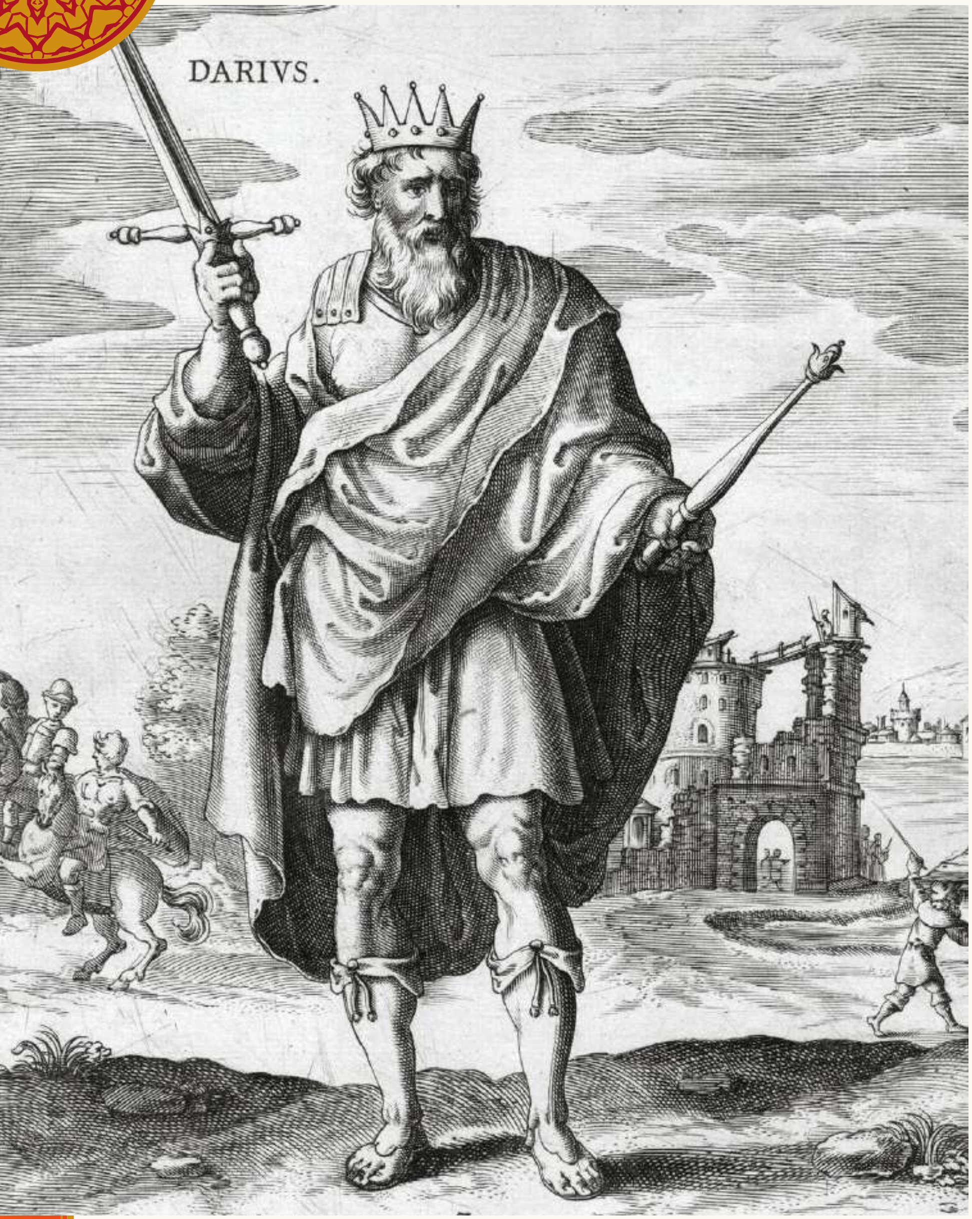
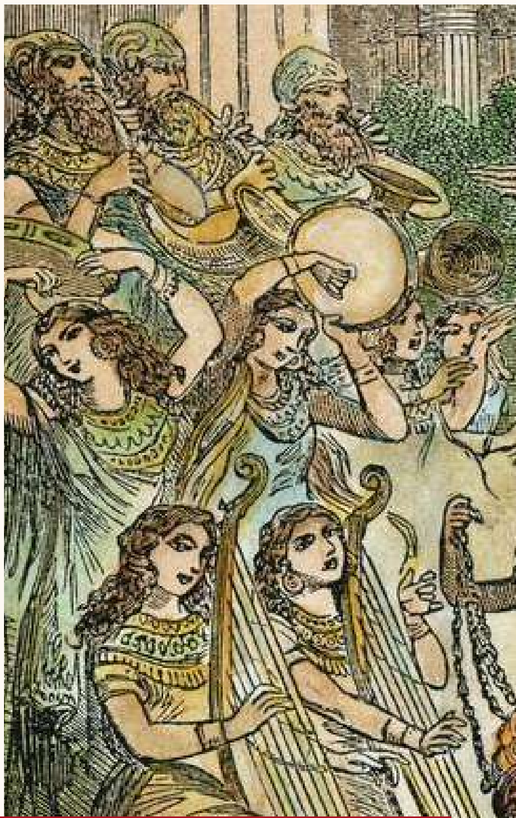




LEFT Darius I died in 486 BCE and was succeeded by his son Xerxes

RIGHT A 19th century wood engraving of Xerxes marrying Esther

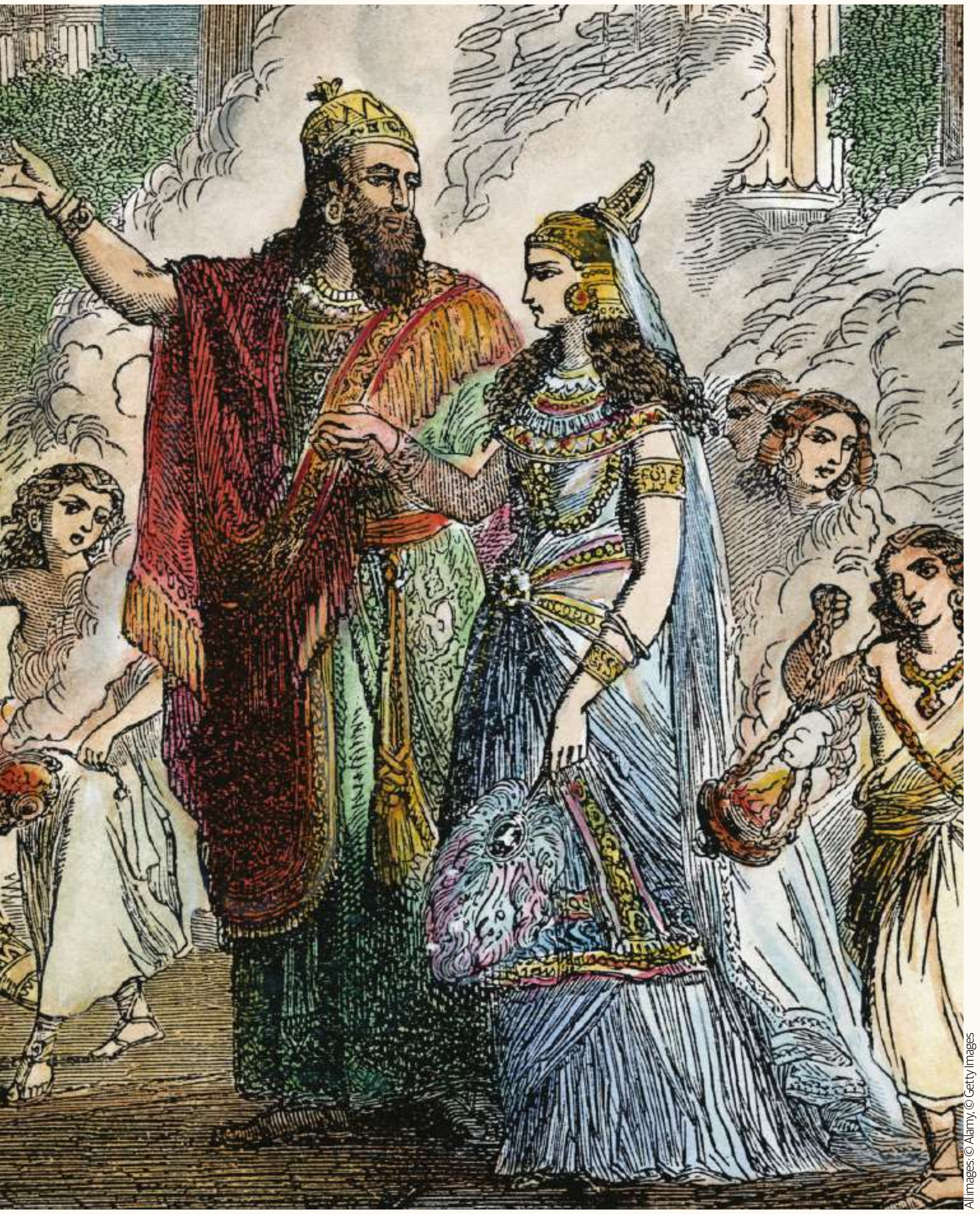
ABOVE Xerxes holds court in a relief in Persepolis, built as the ceremonial capital of the empire

daughter of Cyrus the Great, the founder of the dynasty in 550 BCE. Born in around 518 BCE, Xerxes was destined to rule. His father Darius had overthrown Bardiya, the second son of Cyrus, in 522 BCE (in his inscriptions Darius called Bardiya a usurper and so not a legitimate successor). In Persian, Xerxes' name meant 'Ruler of Heroes' or 'Ruling over Heroes' (Xšaya-ršā). Although he took over as king on the death of his father in 486 BCE, he had been serving as a crown prince for 13 years already, since he was about 18. Prior to that (and again according to mainly Greek sources) he would have been taught to ride and hunt. These were not only aristocratic skills but also directly transferable to warfare, involving both archery and use of the spear. Persian boys, and there is no reason to assume Xerxes was any different, were raised in the Zoroastrian religion and taught wisdom, justice, prudence, bravery and truthfulness.

Xerxes, however, was not the eldest son of Darius. That was Artobazanes who, naturally enough, claimed the throne when Darius died in October 486 BCE, despite Xerxes being favoured and named as successor. Before he became king, Darius had married a common woman (whose name is lost) and had three sons by her (Artobazanes, Ariabignes and Arsamenes). As king, Darius would have an additional five wives and many more sons. The first son born after he became king, however, was Xerxes, born to Atossa (Darius had married another daughter of Cyrus as well, Artystone). According to our (Greek) sources, the argument made was that, as the first son born after he had become king, and as the grandson of Cyrus, Xerxes had the more legitimate claim, especially as Darius was not of royal blood when he seized the throne in 522 BCE. If there was any claim over whether or not Xerxes should succeed, the power of Atossa as the daughter of Cyrus probably easily secured the claim of Xerxes. He came to the throne at the age of 32.

Putting down rebellion

The first task for the new king was suppressing the revolt in Egypt. In all probability, preparation for the expedition was almost completed when Darius died. Xerxes would lead the expedition in person. This was probably to assert his own authority over the empire and the army but was also tied in with finishing his father's projects, a key theme of his reign. He marched to Egypt and had defeated the revolt by early 484 BCE. He appointed his brother, Achaemenes (also a son of Atossa) as satrap of Egypt and the province (satrapy) gave him no further problems during his reign.



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XERXES AND THE BIBLE

In several books of the Hebrew Bible we find a Persian king named Ahasuerus – he may be the same man as Xerxes

In the *Books of Esther*, *Ezra*, *Daniel* and *Tobit* we find an Ahasuerus mentioned. This may have been the Hebrew version of Xerxes' name, Xšaya-ršā. In the *Book of Esther*, she is the Jewish queen of a king, Ahasuerus, who, at Susa "ruled over a 127 provinces from India to Nubia" (*Esther 1:1*). This domain is the same as that of the Achaemenid Empire, as is the capital (although, historically, there were only 26 satrapies). In the text, the king's wife Vashti is deposed and Esther takes her place. There is no record of any Jewish queen for a Persian king, but the story may have had its roots in a scandal regarding Xerxes lusting after his brother Masistes' wife and then her daughter, his niece Artayante, whom he'd had married to his son, Darius, and with whom he had an affair (a sign of his and Persian degradation and decadence to Herodotus). Xerxes' queen, Amestris, took vengeance, not on the daughter but on the mother, mutilating her. Masistes fled towards his satrapy of Bactria intending to start a revolt. In *Ezra 4:6* we find an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem made to Ahasuerus in his accession year (tying in with the revolt in Egypt and, perhaps, other uncertainty with the change of king). In the *Book of Daniel* (*9:1*) we find Ahasuerus seemingly as a different man, Astyages, a king of the Median empire, the father of Darius the Mede. This Darius was the king in Babylon (not mentioned in history) but this may relate to the revolt in Babylon under Xerxes. In the *Book of Tobit* (*14:15*), Ahasuerus is an ally of Nebuchadnezzar who helped him destroy Nineveh – so may be Cyaxares I, who destroyed Nineveh in 612 BCE.

> "In Persian, Xerxes' name meant 'Ruler of Heroes' or 'Ruling over Heroes'"

Babylon also revolted against Xerxes' rule. Although the revolt in Egypt had begun before Darius died, Babylon only revolted in summer 484 BCE. It is possible that the conditions that led to it (which may have been religious or tax-based) were already at boiling point at the end of Darius' reign but the new king might have been expected to fix things. That he did not (he was, after all, distracted by suppressing the revolt in Egypt), and because conditions probably stayed the same, Babylonians chose to revolt, killing their governor and proclaiming a new king. The revolt lasted from 484-482 BCE although it is possible that there were two revolts – one that lasted only a brief time in 484 BCE and a second in 482 BCE. The leaders, Bel-shimanni and Shamash-eriba, were named as king in various cities north and south of Babylon. The first disappeared very quickly – he was either defeated or joined Shamash-eriba. The revolt spread to other cities (Sippar, Borsippa, Dilbat and Kish) and was eventually suppressed following a siege of Babylon. It is unclear what retributions the Babylonians faced for their rebellion. Although it was once claimed Xerxes dealt harshly with the city, there does not seem to have been any destruction of it. It is possible that its previously tolerated religious autonomy, especially in regard to Marduk, the patron god of the city, was dismantled or somehow undermined. Xerxes does seem to have stopped using the title 'King of Babylon' in 482 BCE, perhaps as further punishment to the rebellious city. Other local rival cities such as Uruk were now given preferential

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treatment that may have further punished Babylon. These were nuanced and subtle punishments and not at all the kinds of behaviours we might expect of Herodotus' villain who, when Pythius, a former Lydian king, requested his eldest son be excused military duty (four other sons also served), cut the man's son in half so that his army could march between it. Or from the man who ordered the Hellespont whipped, fettered and branded when Xerxes wished to cross it with his army and it dared to produce a storm.

THE INVASION OF GREECE

After the defeat of Darius I's generals at Marathon (Datis and Artaphernes), the king planned a new expedition to be led by himself. His failing health, however, meant he did not see this expedition to fruition despite three years of planning. Xerxes, therefore, inherited the idea, plans and motivation for this invasion and, once his throne was secure and the revolts in Egypt and Babylon suppressed, he began putting his father's plans into effect (he may have inherited some logistics already put in place by his father). This, too, was in keeping with Xerxes' policy of completing his father's work - perhaps surpassing it. However, whatever army Darius had raised for his invasion of Greece was used for the suppression of the revolt in Egypt; any remnant of that in besieging Babylon. This meant Xerxes had to begin preparing for an invasion of Greece anew, preparations that took four years. These immense preparations for the invasion, as detailed by Herodotus, certainly seem to suggest that Xerxes intended to surpass any plans Darius may have had. At the same time, however, Herodotus' meticulous details of those plans are surely fabricated - or at the very least massively exaggerated. According to Herodotus, Xerxes marched more than five million men into Greece in spring 480 BCE (2,641,610 soldiers and as many support troops). This was in addition to a fleet of 1,207 triremes (with 3,000 50-oared ships, light galleys, and horse transports). The logistics of the day could not have supported anywhere near that amount of men or such a fleet (there was nowhere for such a vast armada to beach each night). And archaeologically there is evidence that the preparations were not so long in the making.

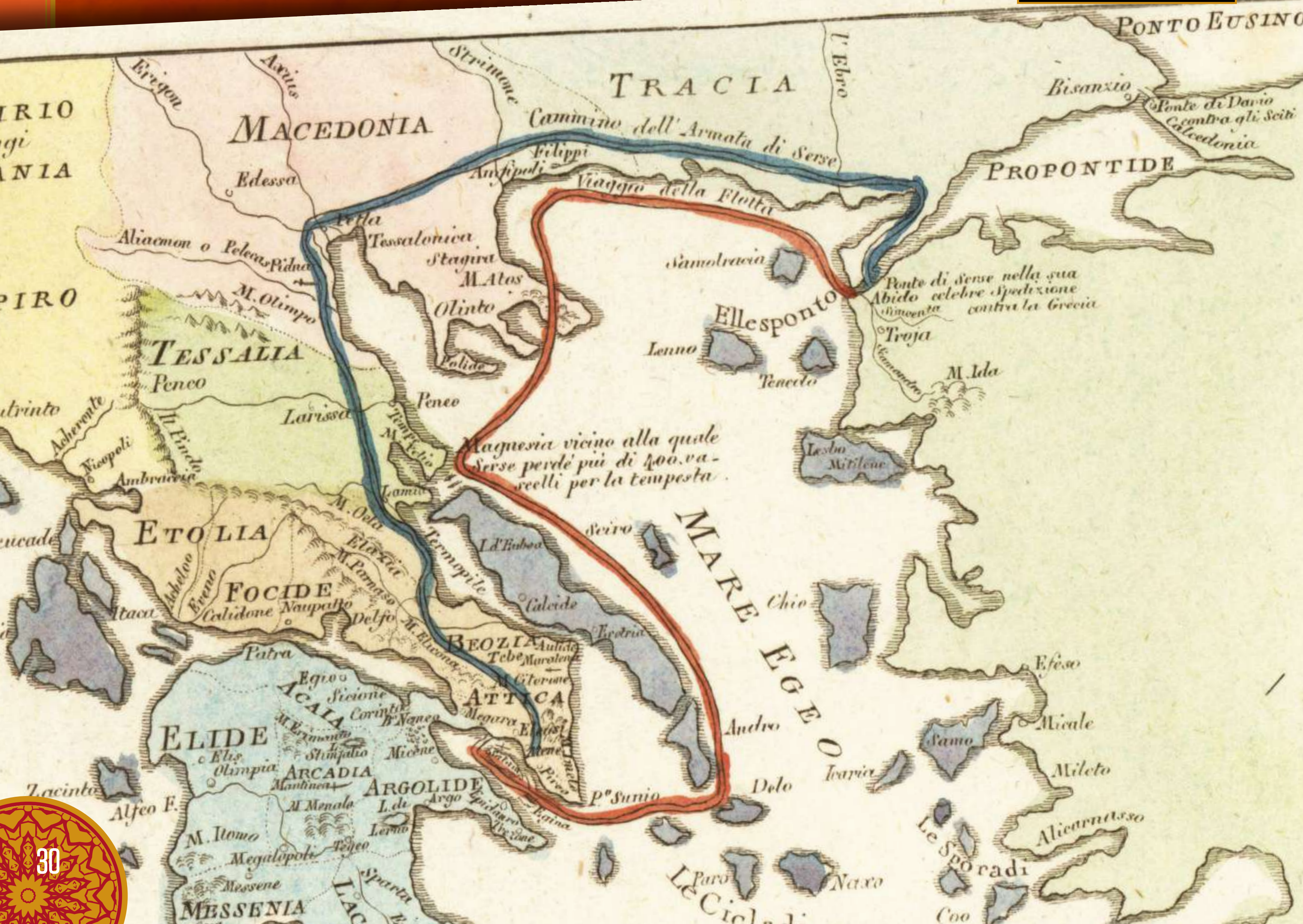
XERXES' MARCH ON GREECE

In spring 480 BCE, Xerxes marched his massive army towards Greece, shadowed by his equally massive navy

KEY

🟥 NAVY

🟦 ARMY


Ponto Eusino
Tracia
L'Ebro
Strimone
Assio
Erigon
Macedonia
Edessa
Cammino dell'Armata di Serse
Filippi
Anfipoli
Viaggio della Flotta
Bisanzio
Ponte di Dario contra gli Sciti
Calcedonia
Propontide
Pella
Tessalonica
Stagira
M. Atos
Olinto
Aliacmon o Peleas
Pidna
M. Olimpo
Samotracia
Ellesponto
Ponte di Serse nella sua celebre Spedizione contro la Grecia
Abido
Simoenta
Troja
Lenno
Tenedo
M. Ida
Tessalia
Peneo
Larissa
Pallene
Magnesia vicino alla quale Serse perde' pui di 400. vascelli per la tempesta
Lesbo
Mitilene
Acheronte
Nicopoli
Il Pindo
Ambracia
Lamia
M. Oeta
Etolia
Sciro
Mare Egeo
L'Eubea
Termopile
Elatea
M. Parnaso
Focide
Calidone
Naupatto
Delfo
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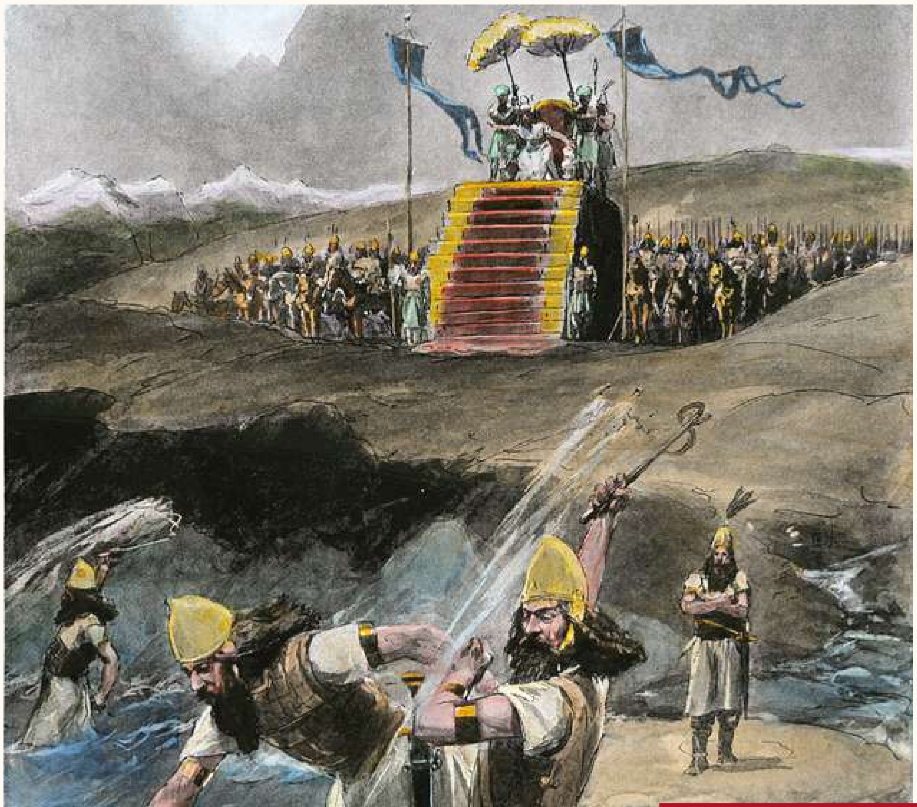
Eretria
Chio
Itaca
Acheloo
Eveno
Patra
Beozia
Aulide
Tebe
Maratona
Citerone
Egio
Sicione
Acaia
Attica
Corinto
Nemea
Megara
Atene
Pireo
Efeso
Elide
Elis
Olimpia
Stinfalo
Micene
Andro
Samo
Micale
Arcadia
Mantinea
Argolide
Argo
P° Sunio
Delo
Icaria
Mileto
Zacinto
Alfeo F.
M. Menalo
Lerna
M. Itomo
Megalopoli
Tegeo
Messene
Messenia
Sparta
Paro
Naxo
Le Cicladi
Le Sporadi
Alicarnasso
Coo



LEFT Herodotus claims Xerxes ordered the waters of the Hellespont to be whipped as punishment for stormy conditions

BELOW A glazed-brick horned and winged bull from the palace of Darius I in Susa, perhaps completed by Xerxes.

BOTTOM Glazed-brick images of Persian soldiers from the palace of Darius I. The appearance of Persian soldiers would remain largely unaltered for the next 150 years

Nonetheless, Xerxes invaded Greece with an army and fleet that outnumbered his opponents. As he advanced, he demanded supplies and water from the cities, tribes, kingdoms and communities he encountered. The vast majority acquiesced and, later, when Greece emerged unexpectedly victorious, they forgot they had gone over to the Persian side, or dressed their actions to say they'd only pretended to. Only one city, the Greek city of Thebes, was not forgiven for 'medizing'; many other communities hid in Thebes' shadow and allowed her to continue to take the blame well into the next century.

The Greeks mounted a defence at the pass of Thermopylae and, at the same time, a naval delaying action at Artemisium. Despite the account of Herodotus and popular culture, Thermopylae was a defeat for the Greeks and an unnecessary one – there was no need for the Spartan king Leonidas and his inadequately small force to remain at Thermopylae once he knew his position was compromised. Likewise, it is highly unlikely the Greeks inflicted 6,400 casualties on the Persians at the expense of a few hundred of their own. But that is the story our sources tell us and, as so often, any Persian version of events has not survived.

"Xerxes marched more than five million men into Greece in spring 480 BCE"

SALAMIS

Once he had taken the pass at Thermopylae, Xerxes advanced on the city of Athens and put it to the torch. This was the entire point of the invasion – to punish Athens. The other perpetrator of the burning of the temples in Sardis, Eretria (a city on the island of Euboea) had been punished in similar fashion in 490 BCE. The vast majority of the population of Athens had been evacuated, however, to the island of Salamis, just off the coast of Attica. In the waters off the island, the Greek fleet had gathered to resist. Understandably, Xerxes chose to fight with his fleet against the Greeks. He outnumbered its vessels by at least two-to-one (400 of his ships had been lost ▶

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in a storm) and victory would end Greek resistance. If conquest was his plan, this would make Greece his.

The account of the battle is given to us from the Greek perspective and is confused, but the Greeks emerged victorious, luring the Persian fleet into narrower waters where their superior numbers counted against them. According to Herodotus, Xerxes had erected a platform the better to see his fleet perform (he had done the same at the Hellespont to watch it cross into Europe and at Thermopylae to watch his army fight). We are not told of the losses to the Persian fleet but the following year we are told the Persians only had 300 triremes – the loss of 500 ships (not to mention the 400 in a storm) makes Herodotus' exaggerations clear – there were never so many ships to be lost in the first place. Herodotus paints Xerxes as afraid he would be cut off in Greece after Salamis and keen to retreat back to Persia as soon as possible. This is not a credible picture, but it is the one that has come to dominate ideas about Xerxes – he was as afraid in defeat as he had been overconfident and cruel in anticipation of (an easy) victory.

Although he is associated with the defeat at Plataea in 479 BCE, Xerxes had already departed from Greece the previous year (and so had spent less than a year on the campaign). He left the fighting of that battle to his subordinates, especially Mardonius, his cousin. And although the invasion was eventually a failure, Xerxes had been victorious on his advance into Greece, at Thermopylae and Artemisium, and in the burning of Athens.

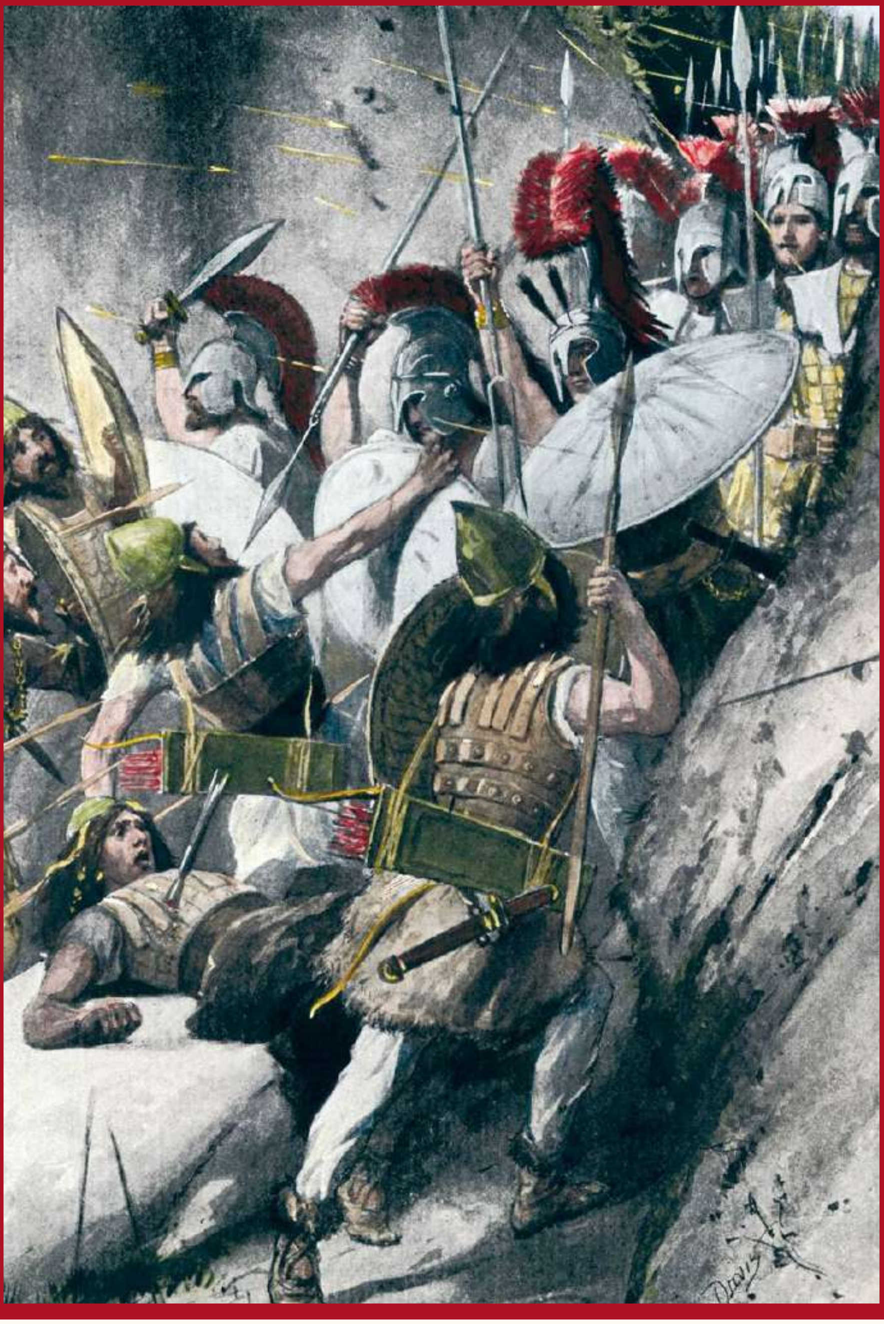
This was the ostensible purpose of the invasion – to punish Athens for burning the temples at Sardis in the 490s BCE. Of course, we are told by the Greek historians that Xerxes actually intended to annex Greece as part of the Persian empire but, because he lost the naval battle of Salamis in September 480 BCE and departed from Greece soon after, we cannot know if that was his true purpose. It probably was but, from a propaganda perspective he had achieved what he'd set out to do. One thing his inscriptions at Persepolis and Susa reveal is that he portrayed himself as completing his

RIGHT The Greek defeat at Thermopylae attained a near-mythical status

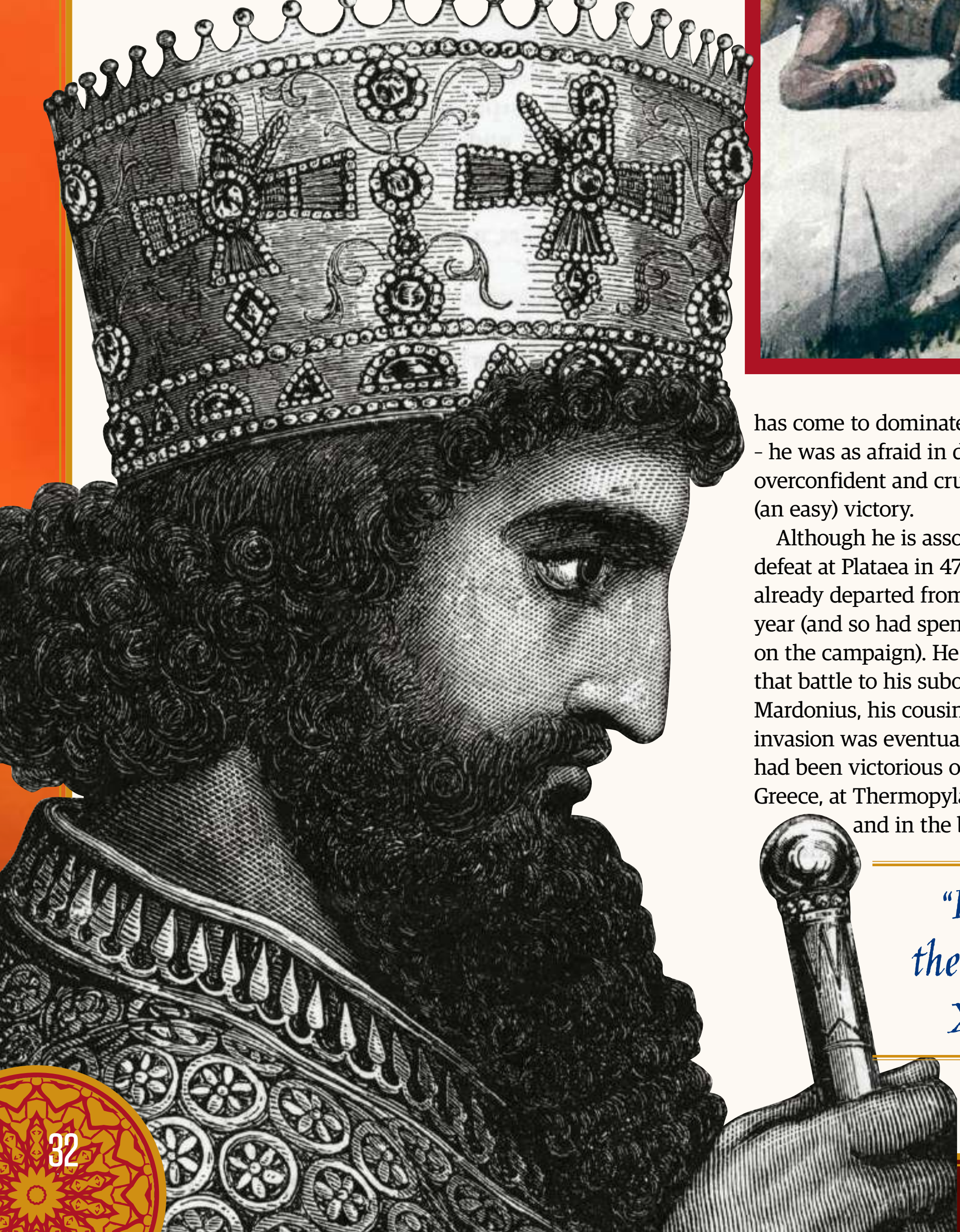
MIDDLE-TOP Greek forces failed to halt the Persians at Thermopylae

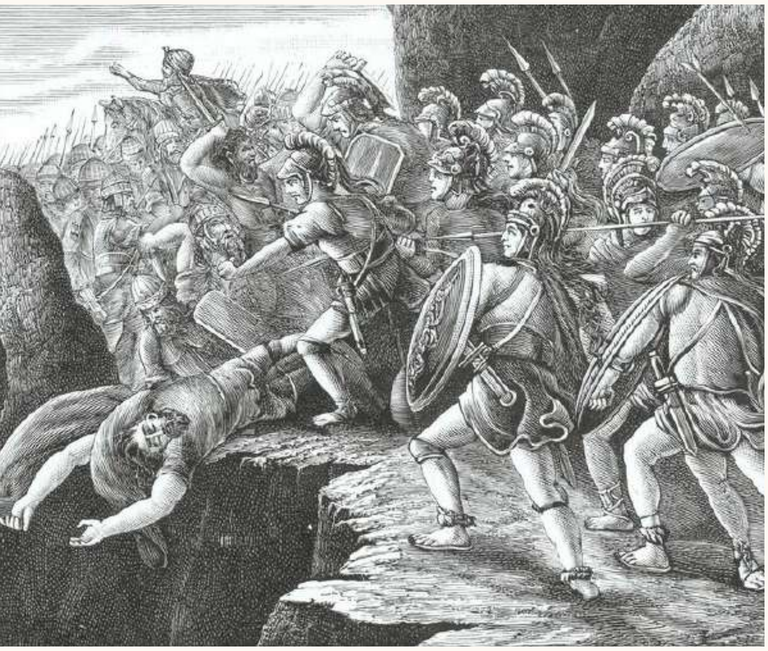
MIDDLE-BOTTOM Lured into the narrow waters off Salamis, the vast Persian fleet was defeated

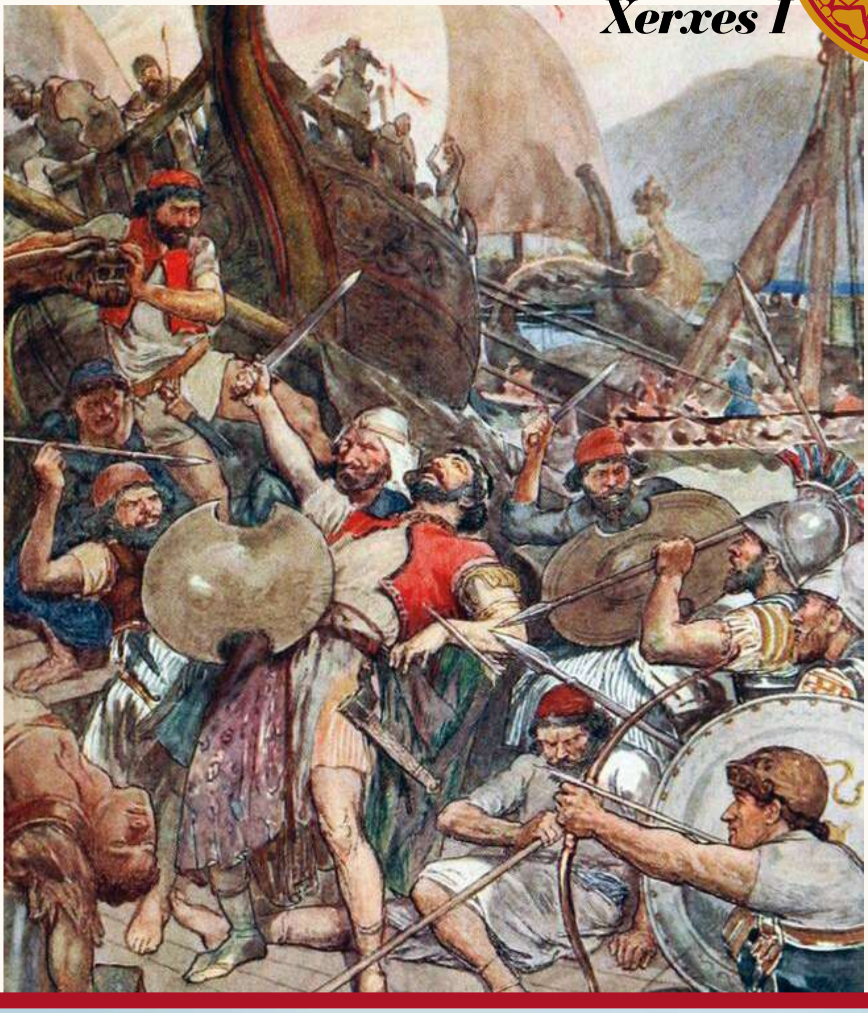
BELOW Xerxes wanted to punish Athens for burning the temples at Sardis

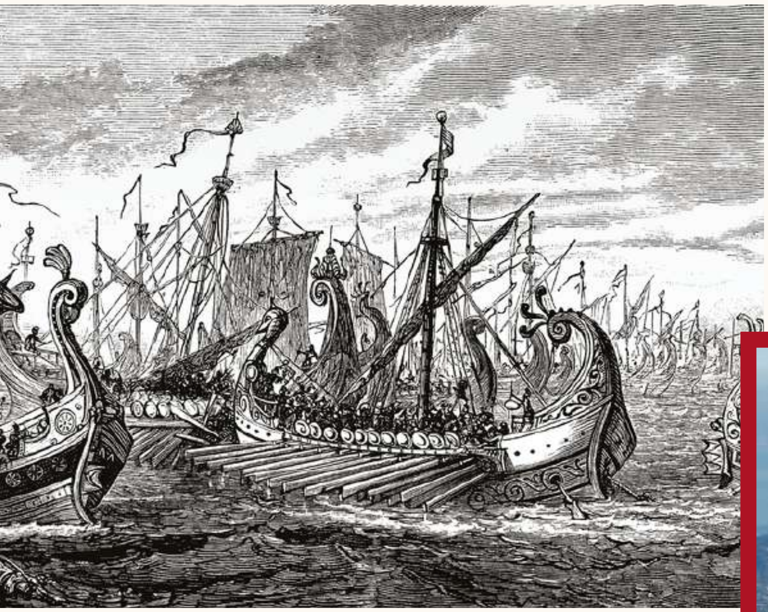


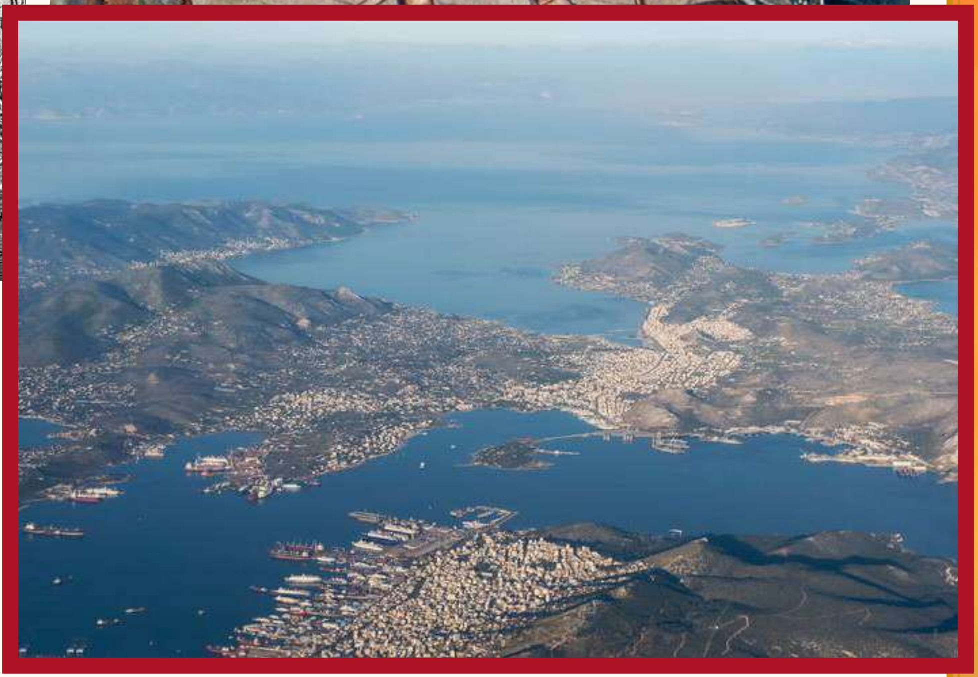
> *"In the immediate aftermath of defeat, there may have been an attempted coup by Xerxes' brother Masistes in 478 BCE"*











father's work. In this his punishment of Athens (and not the annexation of Greece) may have been paramount. Darius had attempted to punish Athens in 490 BCE with a smaller invasion that resulted in a famous and unexpected Athenian victory at the Battle of Marathon. By punishing Athens as his father had intended, Xerxes may well have seen the task completed. His inscriptions also stress piety, and he would've seen punishing Athens for burning the temples at Sardis as a pious act. That said, he may also have wanted to continue adding territory to the empire. Persia would, however, continue to be a major player in Greek politics until the end of the following century – something Greek historians do not like to emphasise. Persia was a major player in the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) and thereafter the King's Peace arrangement of 386 BCE dictated Greek politics for some years. As such, Xerxes' long arm may have influenced Greece far more than Greek historians were willing to admit. At the same time, the victories at Salamis and Plataea gave the Greeks a huge boost in confidence and saw them assert themselves in the Aegean and Black Seas and on the coast of Anatolia – over time this would erode Xerxes' authority. The aftermath of Salamis and Plataea, however, saw Xerxes still wield great authority in western Anatolia; cities like Halicarnassus were still fiercely loyal, as were other states. Xerxes' appointments of new satraps and other reforms to the administration of the region ensured continuing Persian rule rather than widespread rebellion. The picture of Greek resistance to Persian conquest would, we might expect, have led to the latter but it simply did not happen. In the immediate

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ABOVE-RIGHT Xerxes' half-brother Ariabignes was killed at the Battle of Salamis

RIGHT The straits of Salamis, where Xerxes' fleet was defeated. (Modern Perama, Attica, is at the bottom, the island of Salamis above)

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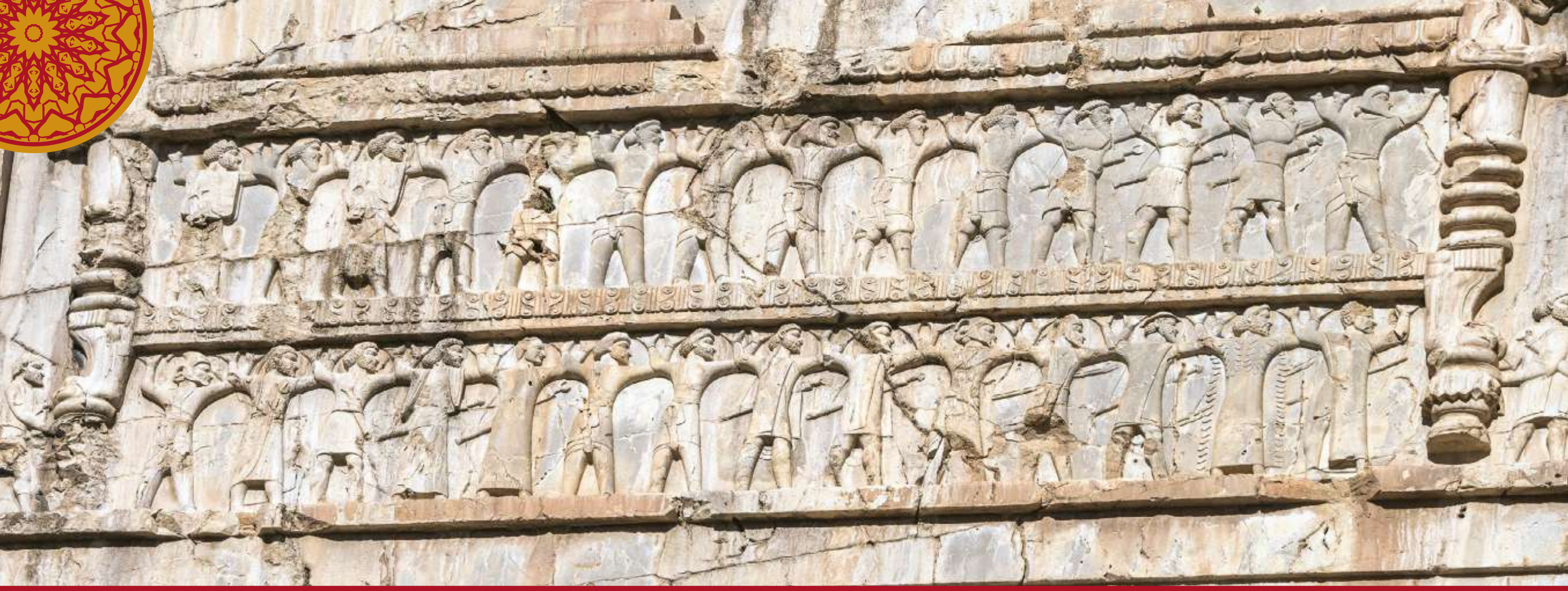
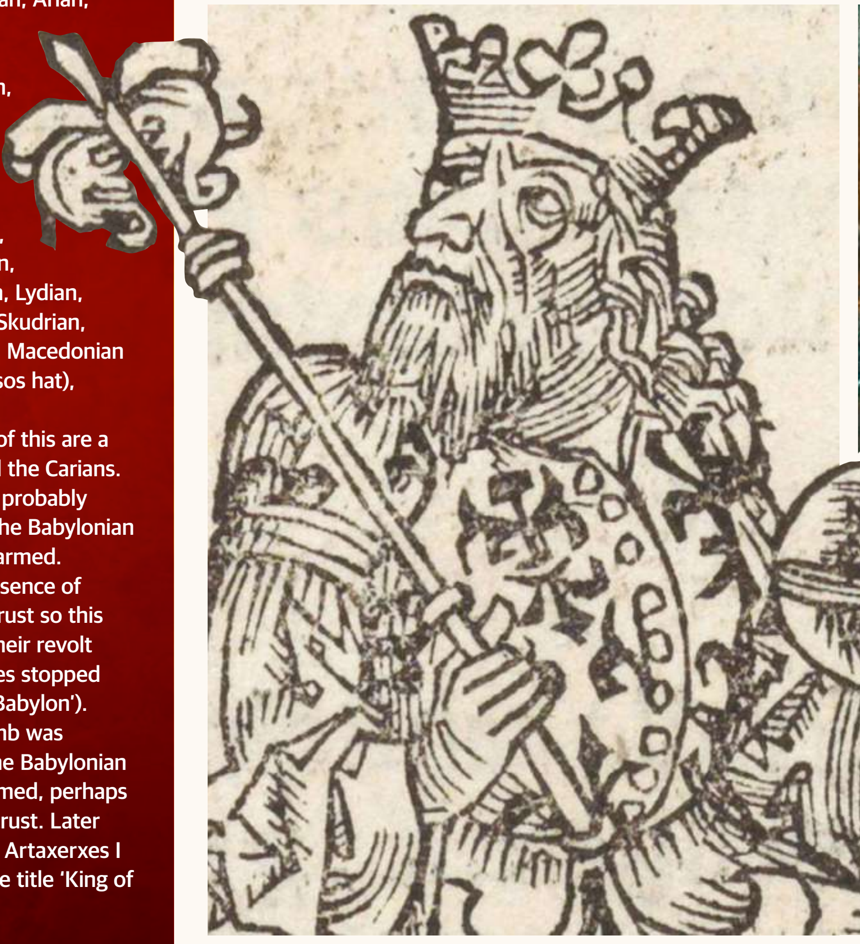


aftermath of defeat, there may have been an attempted coup by Xerxes' brother Masistes in 478 BCE but he was caught and executed before it could be launched and these circumstances may have led to exotic tales of pent-up sexual desire.

BUILDING PROJECTS

While 480 BCE was a short period in Xerxes' reign, he also undertook long-lasting projects. Persepolis was built as the ceremonial capital of the Persians; its name means 'City of the Persians' - this too is a Greek word - while the Persian was Pārsa-karta, which simply meant 'Persia'. Building was begun in 515 BCE under Darius and then completed by Xerxes. The whole city was built on an artificially raised platform 125,000-metres-square, cut into a mountain on one side and using retaining walls on the other three. The structure has five halls (usually described as 'palaces') of varying sizes with grand entrances and stairways. It may have been built as a purely ceremonial centre; identifying domestic buildings and structures has proven immensely difficult. The reliefs that adorn the complex all depict ceremonies involving the presentation of gifts to the

BELOW Artabanus is believed to have headed up Xerxes' bodyguards



THE ARMY OF XERXES

On his tomb at Naqsh-e Rostam, Xerxes details the men who served under him

In this detail of the army of Xerxes I (above), we see men from all the regions of his empire with distinct dress and headwear and weapons. (Top row, left to right): Persian, Median, Elamite, Parthian, Arian, Bactrian, Sogdian, Choresmian, Zarangian, Arachosian, Sattagydian, Gandharan, Hindush, Saka Haumavarga. (Bottom row, left to right): Saka Tigaxrauda, Babylonian, Assyrian, Arab, Egyptian, Armenian, Cappadocian, Lydian, Ionian, Overseas Saka, Skudrian, Ionian (or this may be a Macedonian as he is wearing a petasos hat), Libyan, Ethiopian.

To the left and right of this are a soldier of the Maka and the Carians. On the tomb of Darius, probably completed by Xerxes, the Babylonian soldier is presented unarmed. Bearing arms in the presence of the king was a sign of trust so this depiction may reflect their revolt (at the same time Xerxes stopped using the title 'King of Babylon'). By the time Xerxes' tomb was completed, however, the Babylonian soldier is once-more armed, perhaps suggesting a return to trust. Later in his reign Xerxes, and Artaxerxes I after him, even used the title 'King of Babylon' on occasion.

king and parades of soldiers, and these may represent a new year celebration. Persepolis is also in a relatively remote location so it's unlikely to have been a real or administrative capital – that was located at Susa, one of the oldest cities of the empire, where new building was begun by Darius at the same time as at Persepolis (and also completed by Xerxes). Other important cities were Babylon and Ecbatana, although Babylon retained a fierce sense of independence (as seen in its rebellions – it had been conquered by the Persians in 539 BCE, only 50-odd years earlier when it rebelled). Ecbatana had been the Medes' capital since the eighth century and was conveniently located at a crossroads of several important routes across the empire. In the use of these cities (and in Xerxes' reign more generally) there is as much a sense of continuity with the past as there is with new building work.

Like his father, Xerxes constructed his tomb at Naqsh-e Rostam, a rock cliff 12km northwest of Persepolis that had been used since 1000 BCE and houses four Achaemenid kings. The façade of his tomb, which is a close copy of that of his father, shows Xerxes supported by the soldiers from all over his empire – this includes Macedonians and/or Ionian Greeks.

Much of the remainder of Xerxes' reign is met with silence in our Greek sources, the only evidence is in the finished buildings of Susa and Persepolis and his tomb at Naqsh-e Rostam. His empire remained intact and largely stable for the remainder of his reign.

Assassination

In 465 BCE Xerxes was assassinated by Artabanus, the commander of the Royal Bodyguard and his co-conspirator, the court eunuch Aspamitres. His murder leads many to posit that Xerxes was a bad ruler and a failure, just as we are told he was in the Greek sources. However, there were several crises that led to the assassination. A famine in 467 BCE saw the price of grain increase seven-fold and another defeat, this time at the Battle of Eurymedon, probably fought in 466 BCE, saw Persian influence wane further in the west (although not drastically so). Still, an assassination does not need to have flowed from abject failure – often they arise simply from the ambition of others. Artabanus (who had placed his seven sons in positions of power) may have planned to take the throne; one version (in Aristotle) has the conspirators kill both Darius, the crown prince, and Xerxes. Or it may have been Darius who was responsible – he was blamed by Artabanus. Xerxes' third son, Artaxerxes, put Artabanus and his sons to death and took the throne – even in the turmoil of assassination, Xerxes' succession was relatively stable. Artaxerxes I ruled for 40 years until 424 BCE.

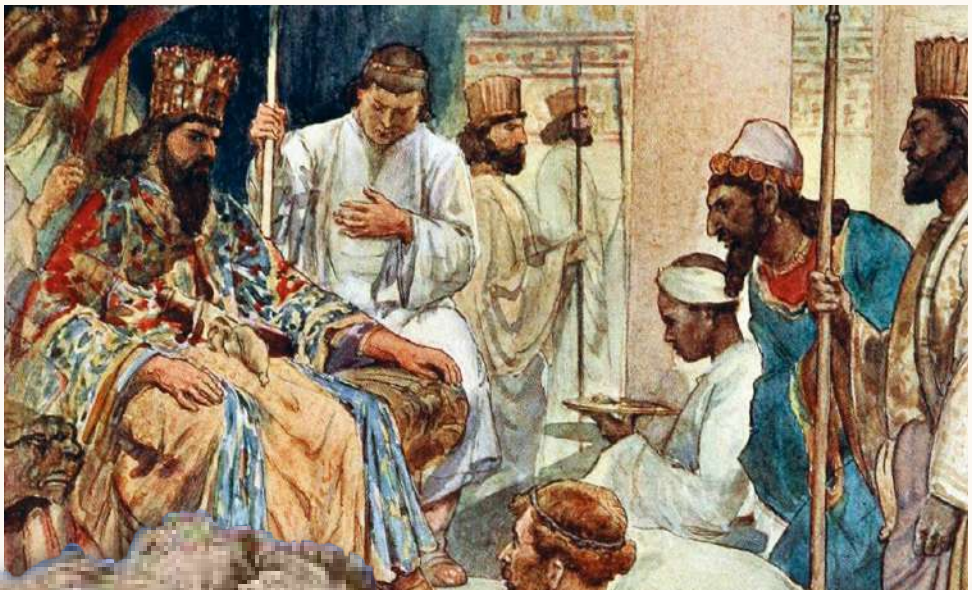
> "The Persian Empire Xerxes left when he died was stronger than when he'd inherited it"

Many factors in Xerxes' reign suggest stability more than the decline and immorality we find in the Greek sources that paint a picture of a moribund empire on the edge of collapse. The Persian Empire Xerxes left was stronger than when he'd inherited it (despite the defeats by the Greeks). The empire had lost no territory as a result of these defeats and Persia would remain the most dominant power in the eastern Mediterranean until the conquest of Alexander the Great in the 330s BCE – more than 130 years later.

BELOW-MIDDLE A carving of a bull and lion from Xerxes' palace, a classic ancient mythical depiction for life and death struggle

BELOW Xerxes was succeeded by his third son, Artexerxes I in 465 BCE

BOTTOM-INSET Naqsh-e Rostam near Persepolis contains the tombs of four Achaemenid kings, including Darius I and his son Xerxes I



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The Hellfire Club

Inside the 18th century elite secret society that may have worshipped the Devil himself

Written by Callum McKelvie

During the 18th century, a new form of British male began to populate high society – the 'rake'. This term came to define aristocratic gentlemen who were purely engaged in the pursuit of pleasure with little respect for the law or traditional morality. A number of clubs and secret societies were founded that allowed their members to indulge their debauched tastes, but none were more notorious than the Hellfire clubs. They combined an 18th century trend of affronting societal notions of morality through acts of blasphemy with excessive drinking and sexual deviancy. The shocking stories of these clubs scandalised British society. As time has passed the Hellfire clubs' secretive nature has resulted in a vast amount of folklore surrounding them. Indeed, the relatively powerful positions of many of their members has given birth to popular legends of the Hellfire clubs as malevolent and sinister organisations.

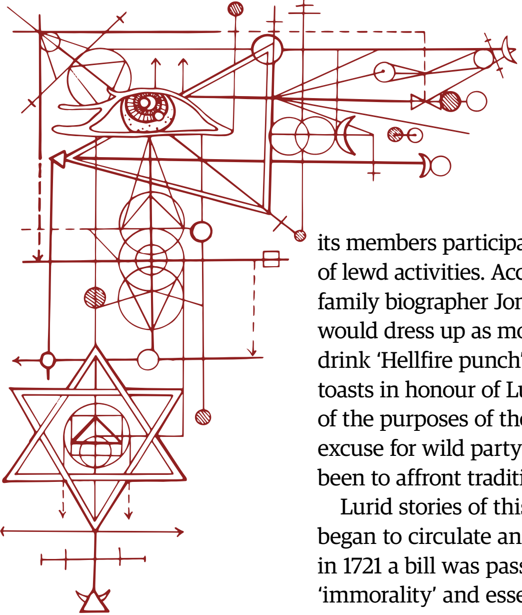
> "The meetings involved mockery of religious ceremonies, with the members dining on dishes such as 'Holy Ghost Pie' and 'Breast of Venus'"

A touch of brimstone

Wharton's club

The first Hellfire club was founded by Philip, Duke of Wharton, around 1720. He was an influential member of the Jacobite movement with a taste for drinking, gambling and accruing debts. This initial club is said to have consisted of 40 members, 25 of whom were gentlemen and 15 were ladies. All were members of the aristocracy as well as being Wharton's close friends and associates. They would meet at a variety of locations in and around London, including the Greyhound Tavern or at members' homes, but always on Sundays.

The Wharton club appealed to the rakes' most base tastes, with



its members participating in all manner of lewd activities. According to Wharton family biographer Jonathan Law, they would dress up as monks or biblical figures, drink 'Hellfire punch' and make theatrical toasts in honour of Lucifer. Indeed, one of the purposes of the club (aside from an excuse for wild partying) seems to have been to affront traditional religion.

Lurid stories of this behaviour quickly began to circulate and the result was that in 1721 a bill was passed that targeted 'immorality' and essentially ended Wharton's club for good. He himself later became interested in Freemasonry and went on to found a number of other clubs and societies.

Into the fires of Hell

Dashwood's club

While Wharton's club was the first, the most infamous was the society founded by Sir Francis Dashwood around 1746. Dashwood himself is a fascinating figure who held the position of chancellor of the Exchequer from 1762-63. A lover of travel and classical antiquity, as well as a renowned socialite, he founded numerous clubs – though none perhaps as debauched as the Hellfire Club. This society met at the dilapidated Medmenham Abbey in Buckinghamshire. Dashwood leased the ruin for his decadent purposes but also restored the site and allowed his artistically inclined friends to use it as a retreat for reading and composing verse.

Members were nicknamed 'The monks of Medmenham Abbey' but Dashwood purportedly never referred to his society as a new incarnation of the old. Instead, they were initially known as The Order of the Knights of St Francis of Wycombe. The 'Hellfire' name appears to have been attached to it over time, perhaps due to the infamy of the earlier club. As with Wharton's, there has been much debate surrounding just how scandalous the activities of Dashwood's club were. It appears the club was again intentionally anti-religion in nature, with stories of sex workers, referred to as 'nuns', brought to the abbey to satisfy the members' lust.

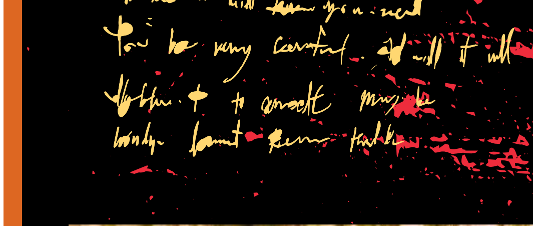
Gothic writer Horace Walpole, the author of *The Castle of Otranto*, was said to be a member (or he at least visited) and wrote a little about the club and its members' pursuits. "Practice was rigorously pagan," he began. "Bacchus and Venus were the deities to whom they almost publicly sacrificed." From this we can deduce that, whatever some of the later rumours surrounding the club's more satanic leanings, its members were more interested in copious drinking, feasting and sexual activities than anything to do with the occult.

As time went on the society moved from the abbey to the village of West Wycombe, where Dashwood had a series of tunnels and caverns dug into the hills. The tunnels extend some 90m underground and are a 0.5km in length, comprising a vast complex with various chambers including a huge banqueting hall. The centrepiece of these caverns is the Inner Temple, which could only be reached after crossing an underground stream referred to as the 'River Styx'. The caverns were decorated with sacrilegious and erotic artworks. According to American writer Daniel P Mannix's somewhat salacious account of the club's history, the roof of the inner chapel was painted with a pornographic fresco so obscene that journalist and politician John Wilkes, not known for being prudish, referred to it as "unspeakable."

Over time, more sinister tales of the supposed occult practices taking place at the club began to circulate. Most likely these originated from mock ritual, blasphemous games and perhaps even from pranks played by its members on one another. One particularly colourful story involves a baboon, the 4th Earl of Sandwich John Montagu and Wilkes. Attending one of the club's meetings, Sandwich purportedly became startled when a creature resembling the Devil ran up to him. Terrified, Sandwich began to beg for his life, crying: "Spare me, gracious Devil. I am as yet but half a sinner. I have never been as wicked as I intended." Except it was no more than a baboon dressed as Satan, hidden by Wilkes and set loose at an appropriate moment. Stories vary as to whether the creature was hidden in a trunk or revealed during some mock ceremony, but either way the effect was the same – Sandwich was completely humiliated and never forgave Wilkes for the prank.

> "One of the members is said to have doused a servant in brandy and set him on fire for accidentally spilling a drink on him"

There were many famous and influential names upon the membership list of Dashwood's club with future Prime Minister Lord Bute, renowned painter William Hogarth and even Benjamin Franklin and the Prince of Wales purportedly visiting at some point. Franklin, after staying with Dashwood, said of his host: "Having kept the best company in the world, is himself the best existing." The Hellfire Club's secretary, and considered by some to have been the true mastermind behind many of its salacious activities, was the noted poet and satirist Paul Whitehead. By the 1760s the club had been disbanded, but adding to its enigmatic reputation was Whitehead's decision to spend the last three days of his life burning all of his personal papers, including those that referred to the society. What was in these papers we will never know.



RIGHT The Hellfire Caves in West Buckinghamshire, where Dashwood's club met, are filled with mysterious carvings

TOP-RIGHT A display in the 'Inner Sanctum' of the Hellfire Caves

FAR-RIGHT Philip, The Duke of Wharton, who first established a Hellfire club around 1720

BOTTOM-RIGHT William Hogarth's portrait of Sir Francis Dashwood, the founder of the most infamous incarnation of a Hellfire club

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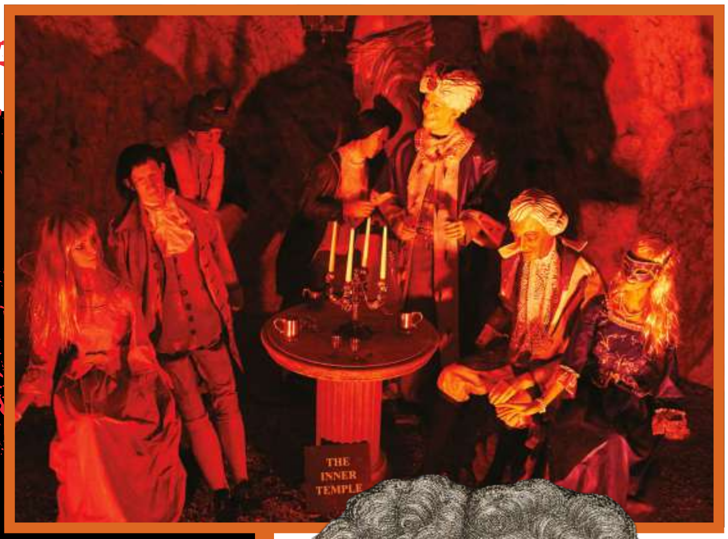

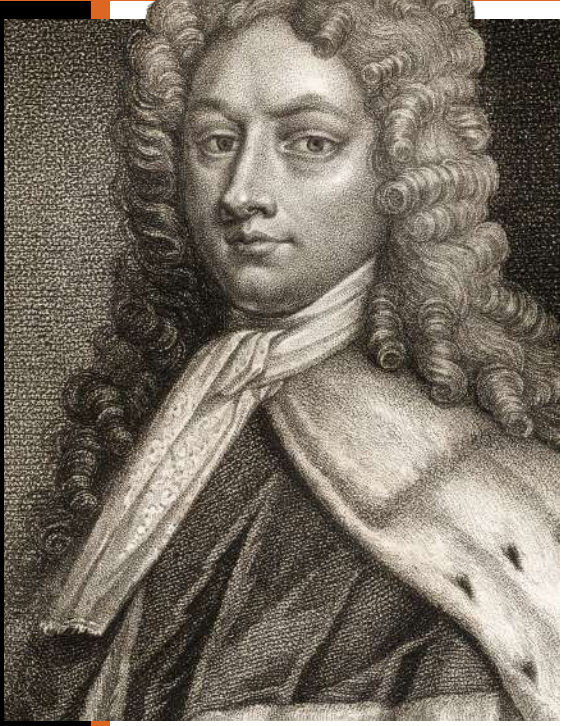

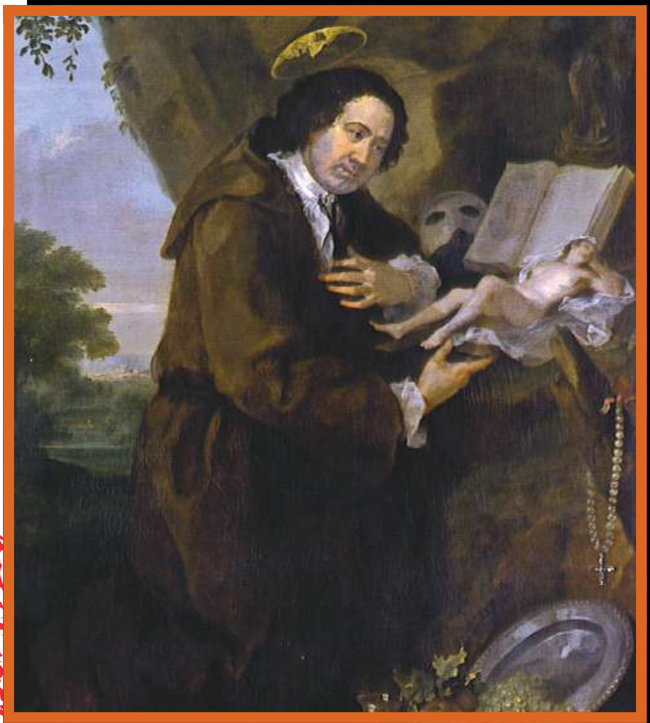

Stoking the embers

The Irish Hellfire clubs

On Montpelier Hill, in the mountains outside Dublin, is an abandoned and derelict shooting lodge known to the locals as 'The Hellfire Club'. Legend has it that this was the meeting place of The Dublin Hellfire Club, founded by the 1st Earl of Rosse, Richard Parsons. His club came into being around 1735 and is the most infamous of a slew of societies that popped up in Ireland from the 1720s to the 1770s. Parsons' club regularly met at The Eagle Tavern, only using the shooting lodge on Montpelier Hill for special meetings. The club's president is said to have presided over meetings seated on a throne and dressed as the Devil, wearing scarlet robes and horns. The club's members were apparently fond of drinking vast quantities of scaltheen - a drink made from whiskey and butter.

The Dublin Hellfire Club was short-lived, and following Parsons' death on 17 June 1741 was all but disbanded. Yet this did not stop it becoming a subject of popular folk legend and a number of stories are associated with the club. According to Frank Hopkins, author of *Hidden Dublin*, one of the members is said to have doused a servant in brandy and set him on fire for accidentally spilling a drink on him. However, the most notorious tale involves a member playing a game of cards with a mysterious gentleman. When he looked down towards his opponent's feet he saw cloven hooves and realised he was playing against the Devil himself. In the centuries since the club's demise the ruins atop Montpelier Hill said to have become one of Ireland's most haunted sites.

Another society, known as the Blasters and founded by painter Peter Lens, was also active. In 1738 this club was the subject of a report by a Committee of the House of Lords and Lens was forced to flee to England due to tales of him toasting the Devil's health. Despite these sinister stories a second Dublin Hellfire Club was said to have been founded, at Daley's Gambling Club during the 1780s. Little is known about this later club and it appears to have quickly vanished, never quite achieving the notoriety of its predecessor.

Legacy of the Hellfire clubs

While the clubs detailed here are the most famous, for centuries there have been stories of revival societies inspired by the originals. The Hellfire name has even become something of a staple in popular culture. A particularly famous episode of British television series *The Avengers* features a modern Hellfire club attempt to take on the protagonists, while the society also appears as regular foes of the Marvel comic book superheroes the X-Men. Recently, the name was referenced in the latest series of the Netflix hit show *Stranger Things*. There seems little doubt that the legend of the Hellfire clubs will continue to inspire notoriety and stories of their debauchery will live on. ○

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GUITAR LEGEND

JIMI HENDRIX

The life and legacy of a rock genius

Written by Emily Staniforth

The 'Swinging 60s' were a definitive era in the history of rock music. Stars from The Beatles to Cream to The Who were making genre-defining music and taking over the world. Among them was a young man named Jimi Hendrix who, in his short life, would come to be remembered as a legend, an icon and one of the greatest musicians to have ever lived.

YOUNG JIMI

On 27 November 1942, Johnny Allen Hendrix was born in Seattle, Washington, to Lucille, a 17-year-old schoolgirl, and Al Hendrix, a 23-year-old private in the US Army. At the time of little Johnny's birth, Al was serving away from home and would not return until 1945. With Al absent for the first years of Johnny's life, Lucille struggled to earn a living as a waitress and entertainer in Seattle's clubs and bars. When Johnny was three years old, Lucille travelled to California for a church convention. She did not return with her son, who was temporarily taken in by members of the church in Berkeley. In September 1945, Al returned from service and reclaimed his son before heading home to Seattle. He reunited with Lucille and the family were together for the first time since Johnny was born. The following year, his name was officially changed to James Marshall Hendrix. The instability and poverty the young Jimmy (as he was referred to at the time) experienced in his first few years would continue to define the rest of his childhood.

Both Al and Lucille had issues with alcohol, and arguing and fighting were common occurrences. During these altercations, Jimmy would reportedly hide in the closet that was his room in the family's small one-bedroom apartment.

EXPERT BIO

© Jessica Norman

PHILIP NORMAN

Philip Norman is a journalist and the author of the definitive biography *Wild Thing: The Short, Spellbinding Life of Jimi Hendrix* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2020) as well as several other acclaimed biographies.

▶

Despite their tumultuous relationship, Al and Lucille had another child in 1948. "Jimmy was sort of the protector of his younger brother Leon," says Philip Norman, author of *Wild Thing: The Short, Spellbinding Life of Jimi Hendrix*. While Jimmy and Leon remained in the family home, Al and Lucille would go on to have three more children who were all put into care after being born with health issues. Eventually Al and Lucille divorced and both boys were left in the custody of their father.

The Hendrix's continued to struggle financially throughout the rest of Jimmy's childhood. Leon was taken in and out of foster care, while Jimmy stayed with Al. The young teenager found solace in music, listening to local musicians in his neighbourhood. "Seattle did have a lot of musical talent. He was aware of music from a very, very young age, but he was aware of music played by white musicians, early rock and roll musicians," says Norman. "When he starts to play he hasn't really gone through the sort of grounding that most African American musicians do, which is to hear the music in church. Jimmy's father wasn't really respectable enough for him to spend very much time in church. [Instead] Jimmy got to hear the records of the early white rock and roll artists like Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly and Ricky Nelson."

However, Black blues artists also inspired Jimmy and at the age of 15 he bought his first guitar for $5 and taught himself how to play by imitating artists like Muddy Waters and BB King. As he was left-handed, he had to restring the guitar and play it upside down. Playing with local musicians and joining several bands at the various schools he attended became a passion for Jimmy. It was during this period that his mother Lucille died at the age of 33 in 1958.

By 1959 Jimmy had dropped out of school and was spending his time playing with his band, The Rocking Kings. However, in 1961 his life drastically changed. "He got in a bit of trouble with the law," says Norman. "Later on, he did rather embellish his own childhood and suggested he was kind of a child criminal and he wasn't really, but the choice was to go to a sort of juvenile hall, like a reform school, or join the army."

Joining the paratroop division, Jimmy signed up to the US Army for three years. But he refused to let serving get in the way of his music and formed a band called the King Kasuals with his fellow soldiers. His passion for music could not be dampened, and Jimmy soon grew tired of army life. It is generally believed that he was discharged after ten months of service due to an injury sustained during a parachute jump. However, that wasn't the whole story. "He left the army under a bit of a cloud. Although he was quite a keen soldier for a while his music began to take prominence and he tried to get out of the army by pretending to be insane and pretending to be a homosexual, neither of which he was. But he did leave," explains Norman.

BEING DISCOVERED

Pursuing music as a full-time career was not an easy task for Jimmy. As an African American artist, he faced racial stereotyping and discrimination as he tried to perform in America at a time of great civil unrest during the civil rights movement. Like many Black musicians, Jimmy's career in the US was confined to segregated bars and clubs known as the Chitlin' Circuit (a derogatory term derived from the soul food dish of boiled pig intestines known as chitterlings). Breaking out of the Chitlin' Circuit was near impossible, even for artists who were internationally famous, and although he performed as a backing guitarist for prominent musicians such as Sam Cooke, Little Richard and BB King under the name Jimmy James, he found it difficult to find recognition in his own right.

By 1965, Jimmy was playing regularly in Greenwich Village, New York City, with his own band Jimmy James and the Blue Flames, and also as a guitarist in Curtis Knight and the Squires. In 1966, Jimmy's performances in New York caught the attention of Bryan 'Chas' Chandler, the bassist of The Animals, who had quit the hugely successful band to fulfil his ambitions of becoming a manager and producer. Chandler, who would come to be remembered as the man who gave the world Jimi Hendrix, signed Jimmy, became his manager and persuaded him to make the move from the United States to the UK. It was Chandler who suggested that Jimmy start spelling his name as Jimi.

"In Britain at the time, it was after The Beatles' so-called invasion of America in the early 1960s and the other bands that followed them to America," explains Norman. "They were all basically playing a British version of American Black R'n'B and [the British] really worshipped those artists who in their own country were not given any sort of respect. Jimi came to London at the very apogee of what was called Swinging London: when the aristocracy of London were people like The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Who and Eric Clapton."

LEFT A young Hendrix in the US Army

BELOW The Jimi Hendrix Experience

TOP-RIGHT Hendrix on stage at Woodstock in 1969

RIGHT-INSET Hendrix playing guitar with his teeth

BOTTOM-RIGHT The charred remains of one of Jimi's Fender Stratocasters

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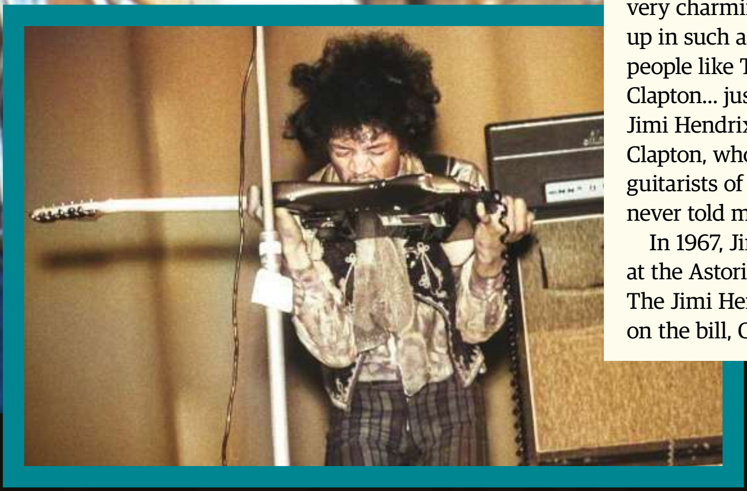


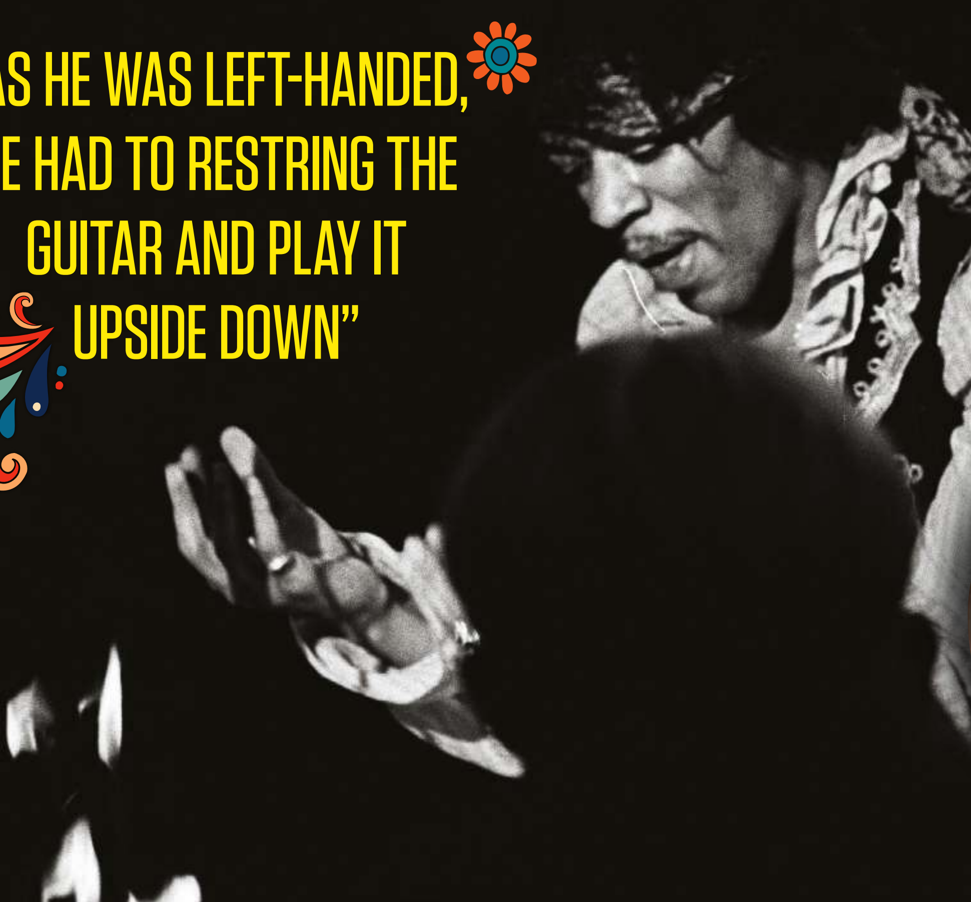
The move to London changed everything for Jimi. While racism was still a problem in the UK (he was nicknamed the 'Wild Man of Borneo' by the press) Jimi's ethnicity wasn't as limiting a factor in his career as it had been in the US. Influenced by musicians around him, Jimi started playing harder rock for the white audiences in London. It wasn't long before he secured a recording contract and set about putting together a band, with Noel Redding as bassist and John 'Mitch' Mitchell on the drums. Michael Jeffery, the manager of The Animals who came on board to help finance the band, came up with the idea of calling the group The Jimi Hendrix Experience.

EXPERIENCING JIMI HENDRIX

Jimi's on-stage persona grew and developed as The Jimi Hendrix Experience went from strength to strength. His flamboyance as a performer captivated audiences as he played his guitar behind his head and with his teeth, and his incredible skill as a guitarist did not go unnoticed by other musicians. "They absolutely, unequivocally adored him," says Norman. "He was a very adorable person, very easygoing, very charming - quite innocent, really, given that he'd grown up in such a hard way. He was immediately embraced by people like The Beatles and The [Rolling] Stones. Even Clapton… just virtually surrendered his title as soon as he saw Jimi Hendrix." After watching Jimi play live for the first time, Clapton, who is widely acknowledged as one of the greatest guitarists of all time, was reported to have exclaimed: "You never told me he was that f**king good!"

In 1967, Jimi first performed his most memorable stunt, at the Astoria Theatre in London. Wanting to make sure The Jimi Hendrix Experience was the most noteworthy act on the bill, Chandler instructed someone to buy lighter ▶

"AS HE WAS LEFT-HANDED, HE HAD TO RESTRING THE GUITAR AND PLAY IT UPSIDE DOWN"



fluid before the show. At the end of their performance, Jimi doused his guitar with it and set it alight. From that moment onwards, the blazing guitar became synonymous with Hendrix's maverick identity on stage.

Gigs around the UK and a couple of successful singles in *Purple Haze* and *Hey Joe* meant The Jimi Hendrix Experience were flying high in Europe. Their first album, *Are You Experienced*, peaked at number two in the UK charts. Later in 1967, they were signed up to play at the Monterey Pop Festival, a show that would be Jimi's first performance back in the US since finding fame away from home. After playing a spellbinding set, he finished the show with his burning guitar act. The performance ensured the band became an overnight sensation and Jimi was inaugurated as an American rock god, despite the unusual mixed-race setup of the band.

"[The Jimi Hendrix Experience] caused quite a lot of shock and surprise in America," explains Norman. "But [Jimi] was so brilliant, in fact, that he just got away with it and toured through the southern states of America, even through the years of tremendous race riots after the murder of Dr Martin Luther King when the place was sort of erupting into flames. Jimi somehow escaped it."

Though Jimi avoided being pulled into the sphere of Black organisations that had sprung up in America in response to years of racism and white supremacy, he did make a huge political statement during his career. His iconic performance at the Woodstock Music and Art Fair in August 1969 was a definitive moment, not only in his life but in the protest movement against US involvement in the Vietnam War. By the time of Woodstock, The Jimi Hendrix Experience had parted ways due to creative differences. Instead, Jimi teamed up with Mitch Mitchell and some other musicians to headline the festival.

"Jimi played *The Star Spangled Banner*, the American National Anthem, in a brilliant way that managed to interpose the sounds of a war into the music of this sacred anthem," says Norman. "It sounded like gunfire and helicopters – goodness knows how he did it – but the thing was that because Woodstock Festival had terrible weather the programming had fallen so far behind that Jimi had to go on stage in the early morning as most of the people were leaving. He played to an audience of a few hundred people rolling up their tents and leaving, but it has still become this extraordinary moment of protest through pure rock."

GONE TOO SOON

Despite Jimi's charisma and confidence on stage, he was a shy man, unlike many of his rock contemporaries. While his outrageous persona was largely confined to his performances, his behaviour behind the scenes became badly affected by the alcohol abuse he struggled with, much like his mother and father before him. His drinking occasionally led to violent outbursts and unpleasant altercations, but it wasn't alcohol that would lead to his early death. After attending a party in London on the evening of 17 September 1970, Jimi took sleeping pills that belonged to his girlfriend of the time, not realising that they were double strength. This accidental overdose led to Jimi dying of asphyxiation after choking on his own vomit while asleep. At only 27 years old, Jimi became one of the founding members of the so-called '27 Club', a group of musicians and celebrities who have all died at that devastatingly young age.

> "JIMI WAS INAUGURATED AS AN AMERICAN ROCK GOD"

ABOVE-LEFT
This 1970 gig in Isle of Fehmarn, Germany, would be Hendrix's last

ABOVE-INSET
Hendrix's flamboyant appearance and performances were in contrast to his shy manner in private

ABOVE-RIGHT
His career only spanned 12 years, but Hendrix left a lasting impact

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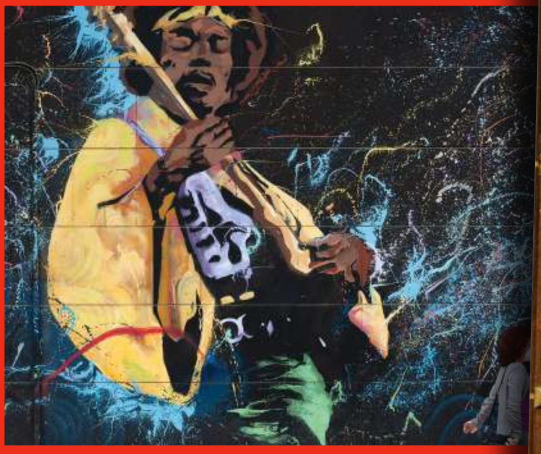
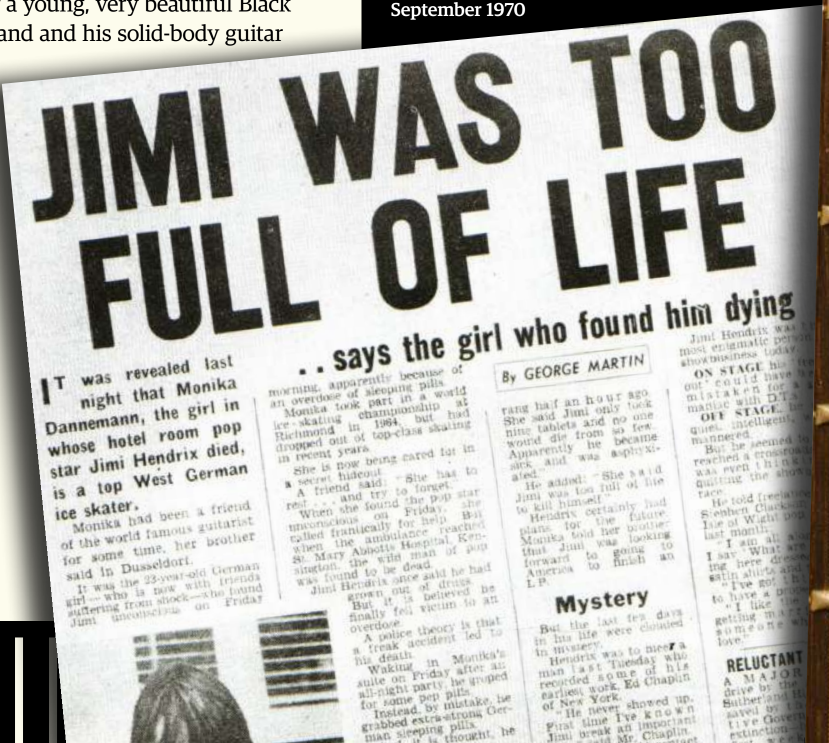


Jimi left behind a body of work that continues to define rock music and influence artists who view him as one of the greatest musicians of all time. In 1975, Queen singer Freddie Mercury described the impact Jimi had on him, reportedly saying: "Jimi Hendrix is very important. He's my idol. He sort of epitomises, from his presentation on stage, the whole works of a rock star. There's no way you can compare him. You either have the magic or you don't. There's no way you can work up to it. There's nobody who can take his place."

For a young boy born into poverty who taught himself to play guitar as a teenager, Jimi Hendrix became one of the most revered and iconic musicians in the space of only 12 years. "Jimi is that figure of a young, very beautiful Black young man with his headband and his solid-body guitar and he almost has a kind of sainthood. He is the perfect myth," says Norman. "A lot of people really don't know very much about him… where he came from, the awful background that he had and the mixture of miraculous talent and miraculous good luck that took him by that roundabout route to London in the swinging years and then back to conquer the whole of America in the way no other Black artist had been able to do before." ○

ABOVE A graffiti mural of Hendrix in Malaga, Spain

BELOW A newspaper reports on the untimely death of Hendrix in September 1970



JIMI WAS TOO FULL OF LIFE

. . says the girl who found him dying

By GEORGE MARTIN

IT was revealed last night that Monika Dannemann, the girl in whose hotel room pop star Jimi Hendrix died, is a top West German ice skater.

Monika had been a friend of the world famous guitarist for some time, her brother said in Dusseldorf.

It was the 23-year-old German girl — who is now with friends suffering from shock — who found Jimi unconscious on Friday morning, apparently because of an overdose of sleeping pills.

Monika took part in a world ice-skating championship at Richmond in 1964, but had dropped out of top-class skating in recent years.

She is now being cared for in a secret hideout.

A friend said: "She has to rest . . . and try to forget."

When she found the pop star unconscious on Friday, she called frantically for help. But when the ambulance reached St. Mary Abbotts Hospital, Kensington, the wild man of pop was found to be dead.

Jimi Hendrix once said he had grown out of drugs.

But it is believed he finally fell victim to an overdose.

A police theory is that a freak accident led to his death.

Waking in Monika's suite on Friday after an all-night party, he groped for some pep pills.

Instead, by mistake, he grabbed extra-strong German sleeping pills, it is thought, he

rang half an hour ago. She said Jimi only took nine tablets and no one would die from so few. Apparently he became sick and was asphyxiated."

He added: "She said Jimi was too full of life to kill himself."

Hendrix certainly had plans for the future. Monika told her brother that Jimi was looking forward to going to America to finish an L.P.

Mystery

But the last few days in his life were clouded in mystery.

Hendrix was to meet a man last Tuesday who recorded some of his earliest work, Ed Chaplin of New York.

"He never showed up. First time I've known Jimi break an important Mr. Chaplin.

Jimi Hendrix was
most enigmatic person
showbusiness today.

ON STAGE his
out" could have
mistaken for a
maniac with D.T.

OFF STAGE he
quiet, intelligent,
mannered.

But he seemed to
reached a crossroads
was even thinking
quitting the show

He told freelance
Stephen Clackson
Isle of Wight pop
last month:

"I am all alo
I say 'What are
ing here dressed
satin shirts and

"I've got th
to have a brot

"I like the
getting mar
someone wh
love."

RELUCTANT

A MAJOR
drive by the
Sutherland H
saved by th
tive Govern
extinction—

HENDRIX HITS

The tracks that defined his incredible career

ALL ALONG THE WATCHTOWER *1968*

The Jimi Hendrix Experience
ALL ALONG THE WATCHTOWER
CAN YOU SEE ME

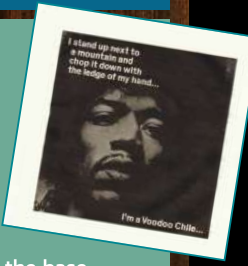
A revolutionary cover of a Bob Dylan song, Hendrix displayed his musicality and talent with a guitar to transform this track into a classic rock song.

PURPLE HAZE *1967*

JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
PURPLE HAZE
51st Anniversary

The second single released by The Jimi Hendrix Experience and written by Jimi, *Purple Haze* is one of the band's most well-known songs and epitomises their sound and attitude.

VOODOO CHILE *1968*


I stand up next to a mountain and chop it down with the ledge of my hand...
I'm a Voodoo Chile...

A track on *Electric Ladyland*, *Voodoo Chile* evolved from a jam session between Hendrix, Mitchell and other musicians. It's 15 minutes long and forms the base of *Voodoo Child (Slight Return)*.

HEY JOE *1967*

HEY JOE
JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE

It was Chandler's idea to cover *Hey Joe* in order to create a hit song. Jimi's version was the band's first single and successfully made it into the UK charts, introducing the band to many.

FIRE *1967*

Jimi Hendrix
Fire / Are You Experienced

Written by Jimi, *Fire* is one of the band's most popular songs and was featured on their first album *Are You Experienced*. It perfectly mixes the band's blues, psychedelic and soul influences.

domus marchi consily
Turris Josep
Castela dauid
hic beata virgo obiit
hic Jhesus cene celebrauit
ospitale
hic electus fuit sant' mathias
domus kayfe
monte Syon
dom' anne
Templu Simeonis

QUEENS OF JERUSALEM

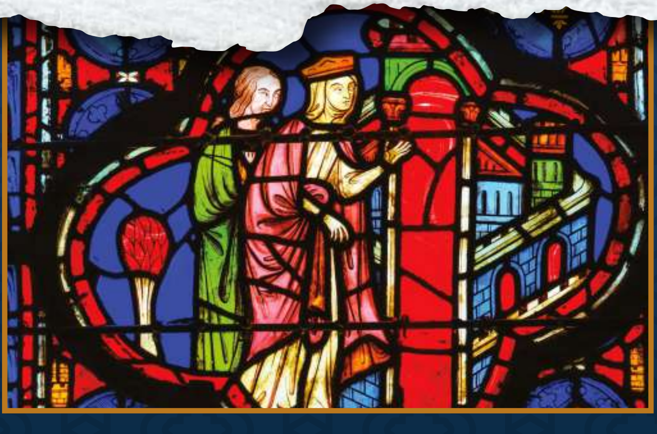
Meet some of the women who reigned over the medieval Middle East

Written by Katharine Marsh

der bilgram Spittal
der hailig tempel da in das hailig grab ist
hie das die mörin Salomonis
templ. Salomonis
pilat
nativitas Sancte marie
porta s. Stefane

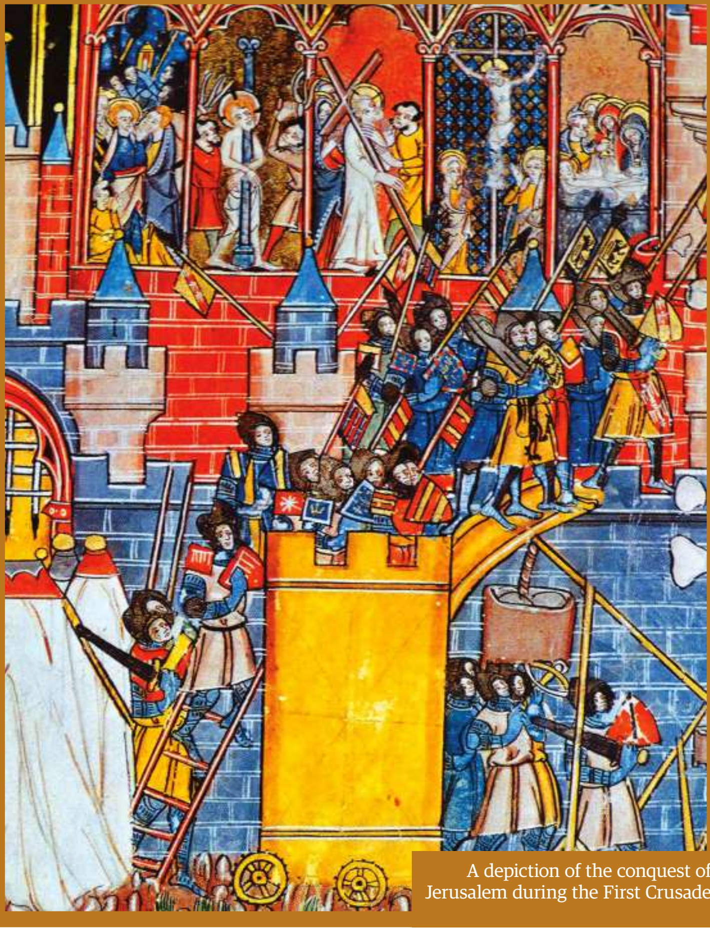
Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world – its history, spanning all the way back to the 4th century BCE – is long and chequered. Over the centuries, it has been ruled by emperors, kings and caliphs, all leaving an indelible mark on the region. But there is one category of ruler that is often forgotten when it comes to Jerusalem: its queens.

When the Crusades saw the kingdom of Jerusalem born, it was at a time when men were considered to have the right to rule, and women less so. But from Jerusalem's second king, there was almost always also a queen. In fact, there were a fair few years with queens regnant ruling the roost. So here are 11 of the medieval women who made their mark alongside their husbands, as regents for family members or on their own in a male-dominated world.



LEFT This stained glass window in the Sainte-Chapelle, Paris, depicts one of Jerusalem's many queens

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images



A depiction of the conquest of Jerusalem during the First Crusade

ISABELLA I

Reigned: 1190 - 1205

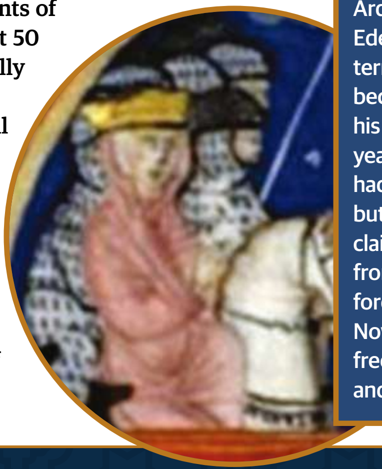
When Baldwin IV died in 1186, Jerusalem's court was split. There were two heirs, both women: Sibylla, his sister, and Isabella. It was Isabella's husband Humphrey who cost her the throne - he had no desire to become king of Jerusalem - so it went to Sibylla. But on her death four years later, it was Isabella's turn. The problem was her husband - considered spineless, Isabella was convinced to trade him in for Conrad of Montferrat. Immediately after the wedding she called on her barons to do homage to her; she was the reason Conrad could sit on a king's throne, she had the power. They ruled together for less than a year, as Conrad was assassinated. Pregnant with his child, Isabella married Henry II of Champagne, the illustrious nephew of the kings of France and England. He found himself dead in 1197, and Isabella was on to husband number four: Amalric of Lusignan, king of Cyprus. At the time of her death, she was once again without a husband (this time it was food poisoning), and her son had died two months before that. We don't know how Isabella died but this daughter, wife and mother of kings was just 33 years old and she had experienced more than her fair share of family drama.

ALICE OF CHAMPAGNE

Reigned: 1243-46

Regency was a second-best option for Alice. She had tried to put her name forward as queen in 1229, but her divorce from Bohemond V, Prince of Antioch, saw her claim rejected. It undoubtedly stung - her grandmother was Maria Komnene (queen of Jerusalem from 1167-74) and royal blood pumped through her veins. It'd be another 14 years before she had another shot at the throne.

Alice married again - it was her third marriage - to Ralph, Count of Soissons. She also saw her great-nephew, Conrad, be declared king of Jerusalem in 1228, but he never made the journey east to visit his kingdom; he was busy in Germany, eventually becoming king there in 1237. It took years of battle and heartache, but finally, in 1243, Alice and her husband were recognised as regents of Jerusalem. Alice, at 50 years old, was finally in charge, and she enjoyed some royal prerogatives. However, her regency would only last three years as she died in 1246, with the crown passing to her son, Henry I of Cyprus.



ARDA OF ARMENIA

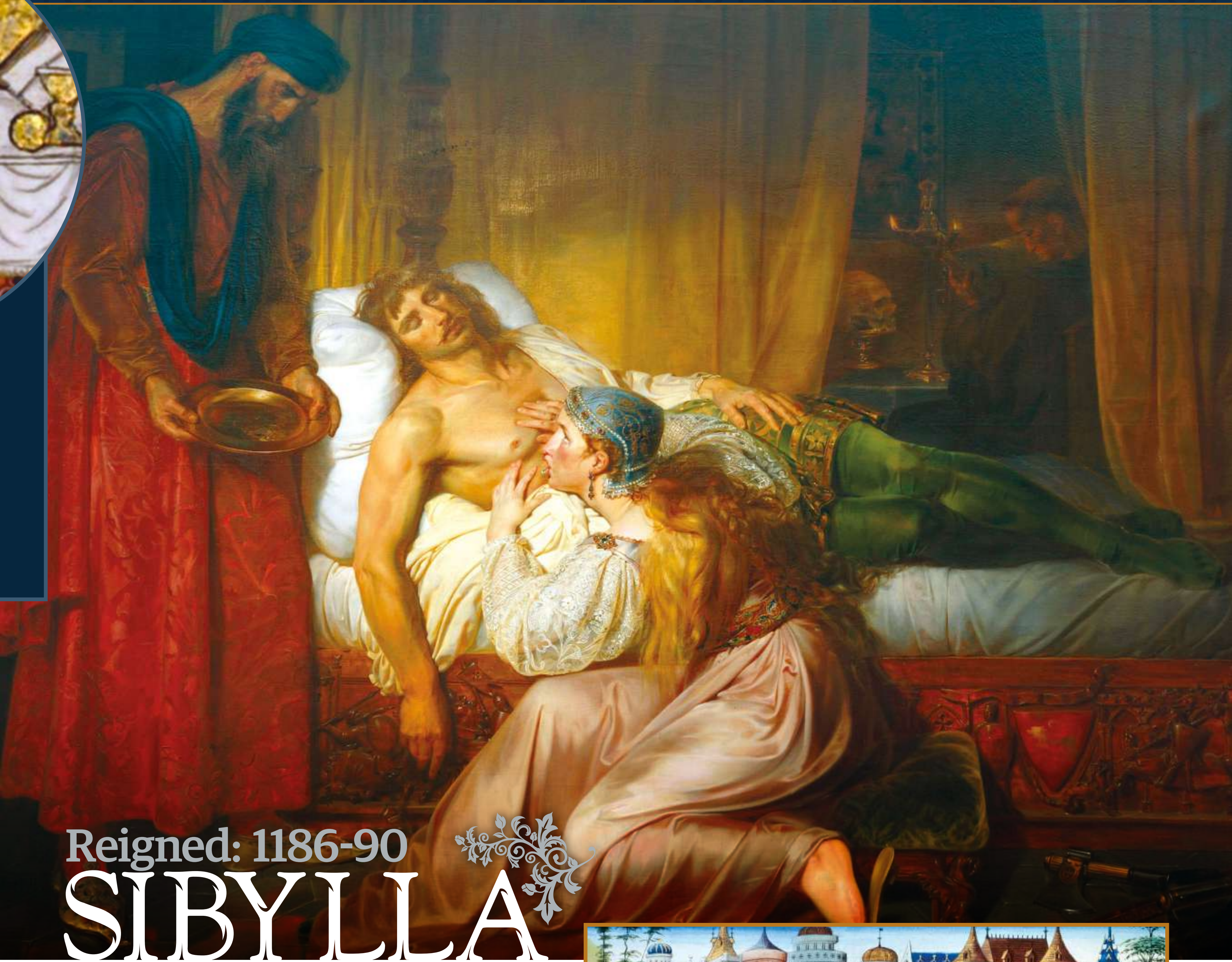
Reigned: 1100-05

Little is known of Arda - including her real name - but she is still remembered today as Jerusalem's first queen consort. An Armenian princess, her husband was Baldwin of Boulogne, one of the First Crusade's leaders. Thanks to Arda's father, Baldwin became the first count of Edessa, a crusader state taken from Armenian territory in Mesopotamia. He then went on to become Jerusalem's first king, with Arda by his side. Arda remained childless, and just five years into being king it seems that Baldwin had had enough. The marriage was annulled, but Baldwin's reasoning was dicey at best - he claimed that Arda had been raped on her journey from Edessa to Jerusalem a few years prior, and forced her to join a convent despite her protests. Now that she was committed to God, he was free to declare their marriage officially ended and he set out on his search for a second wife.

MARIA OF MONTFERRAT

Reigned: 1205-12

Daughter of Isabella I and Conrad of Montferrat, Maria never knew her father - he died before she was born in 1192. In 1205, when she was just 13, her own annus horribilis saw the deaths of her mother, stepfather and infant half-brother, leaving Maria as queen regnant of Jerusalem. While in her minority, her uncle John of Ibelin was regent, but from 1209 Maria took full control. Her husband, John of Brienne, was offered to her by Philip II of France, and together they were crowned king and queen on 3 October 1210 at Ture Cathedral. Unfortunately, Maria died just two years later, aged around 20, leaving behind her husband and infant daughter, now Isabella II.



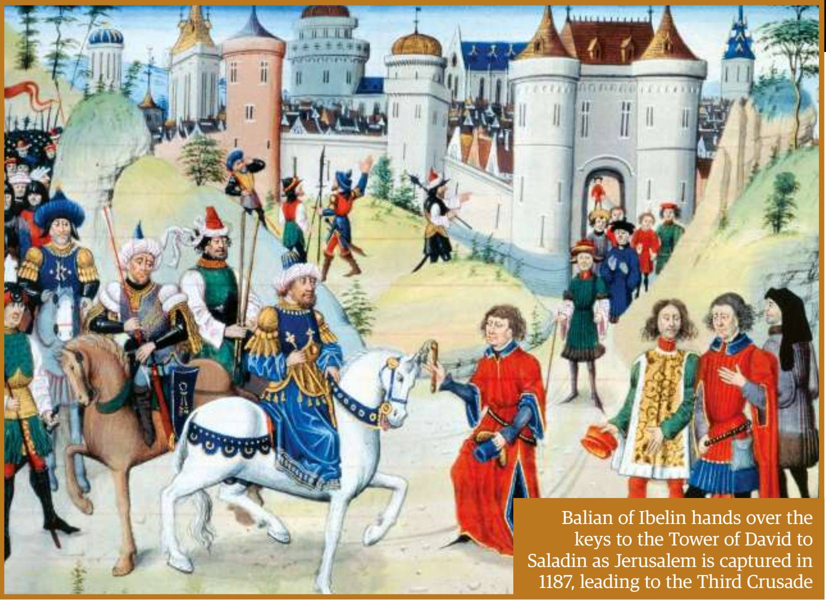
Reigned: 1186-90

SIBYLLA

Sibylla's life would never be free of family conflict. Her parents were forced to separate when she was young, leaving Sibylla and her brother, Baldwin, under their father's control. While Baldwin was taught the inner workings of the court, Sibylla was isolated in a nearby convent. But when her brother contracted leprosy, it was clear that the princess would be next in line to the throne.

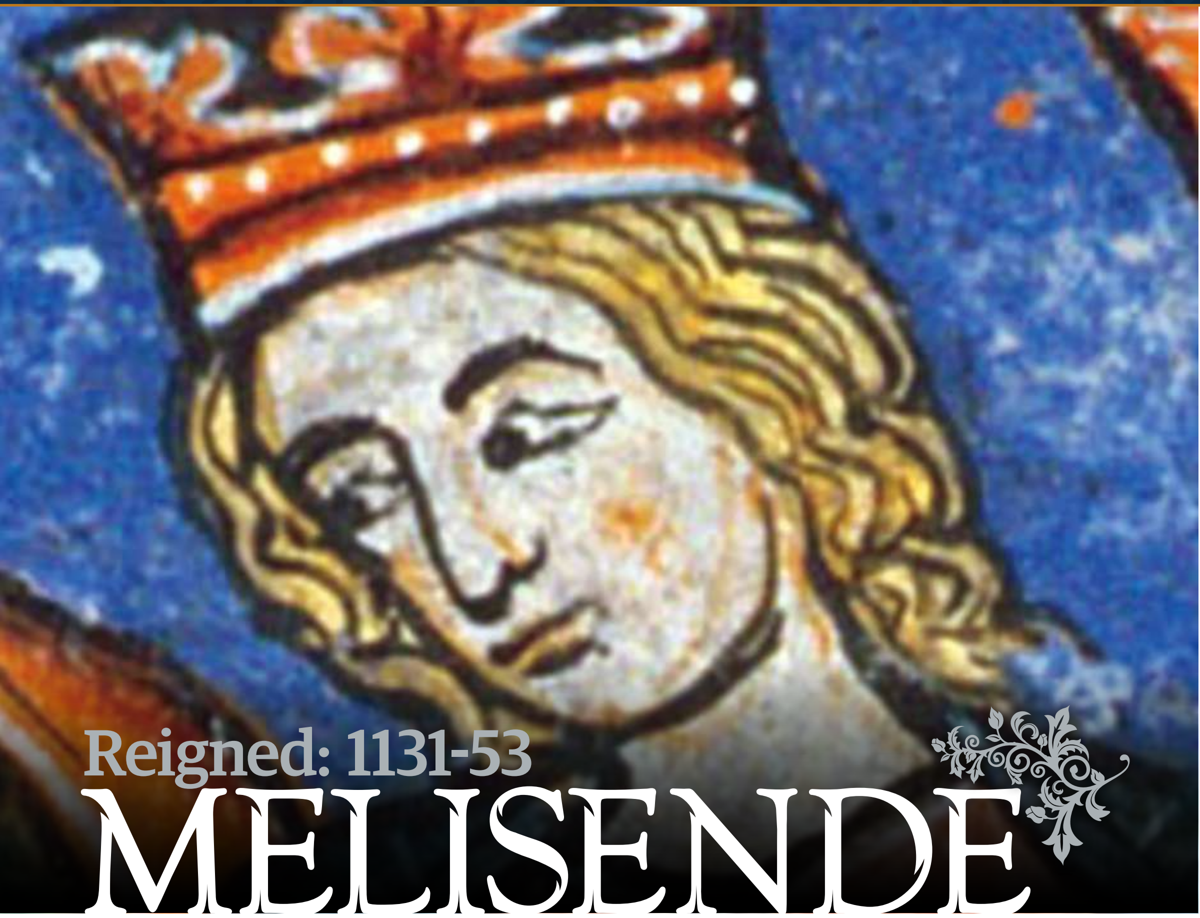
After six years of searching, a husband was found, but he died just eight months after the wedding. Her second husband, Guy de Lusignan, came into the picture and Sibylla fell in love… but no one else liked him. She refused to divorce him, instead proposing a 'compromise': she would only leave him if she could choose her next husband. When the court agreed, she chose Guy.

When Sibylla and Guy took the throne in 1186, it didn't go well. Guy lost 17,000 soldiers and Jerusalem within a year before being taken prisoner. Sibylla had to defend the kingdom on her own, so she begged Sultan Saladin to imprison her with her husband. It was there she would die, by her husband's side, devoted to the man her kingdom hated until the bitter end.



Balian of Ibelin hands over the keys to the Tower of David to Saladin as Jerusalem is captured in 1187, leading to the Third Crusade

All images: © Alamy



Reigned: 1131-53

MELISENDE

Born to a man who then became king of Jerusalem, Melisende, the eldest of four daughters, found herself as the heir to the kingdom when her mother died around October 1126. Her marriage to Fulk V, Count of Anjou and Maine, in 1129 gave her an heir. But when her father died in 1131, he left a strange succession rule – Melisende, Fulk and their son were to jointly inherit the throne.

At first, Melisende wasn't allowed to do much, but when Fulk proved an ineffectual ruler, she took on more power. A building programme was started across Jerusalem, including work on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But the unexpected happened in 1143: Fulk died, leaving Melisende and their son, Baldwin III, who was only 13. Melisende ruled as regent, and apparently she was good at it. The problems didn't come until the early 1150s, when Baldwin was coming to his majority and didn't want his mother in charge. He won the battle, becoming sole ruler of Jerusalem. Nevertheless, Melisende still held official roles at court until her death in 1161.

Melisende of Jerusalem's crypt is located inside the Tomb of the Virgin Mary

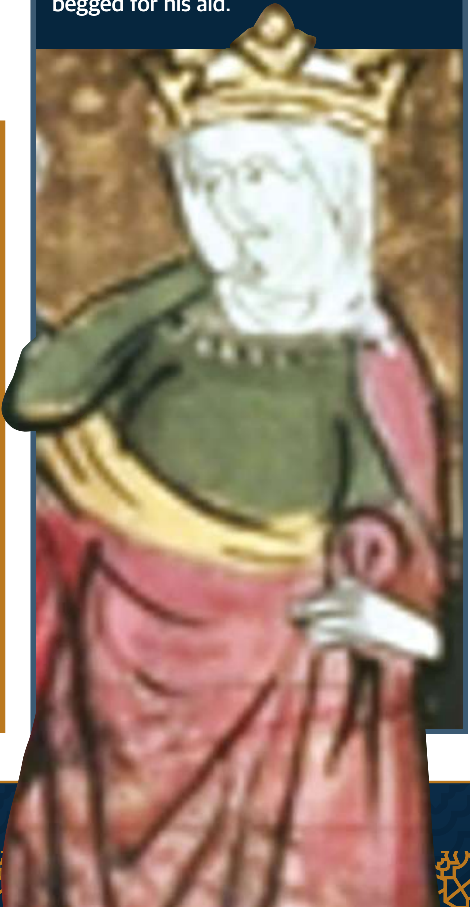
All images: © Alamy

ADELAIDE DEL VASTO

Reigned: 1112-16

After his divorce from Arda of Armenia, Baldwin I's second wife was Adelaide del Vasto. As it turns out, their marriage was for one thing and one thing only: money. Jerusalem's treasury was empty, and Adelaide was a widowed mother of three… and regent of Sicily. When her son Roger reached his majority, Adelaide was sent with her money to Jerusalem to become queen. She had been astute in the marriage negotiations, too – Baldwin was so desperate for the cash that he had let Adelaide name her terms and she managed to convince him that Roger would be his heir if she didn't have another son.

Her fortunes – and fortune – wouldn't last. Baldwin's first wife was still very much alive, and opposition to this new marriage was strong. Eventually, with Adelaide's money gone, Baldwin admitted to his bigamy and had his marriage annulled. Adelaide was shipped off back to Sicily where she would die two years later, but her son would never forget Jerusalem's treatment of his mother. For the rest of his reign in Sicily, he refused to help the kingdom despite how much they begged for his aid.



THEODORA KOMNENE

Reigned: 1158-62

Theodora Komnene was a royal through and through. She was the niece of Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos, granddaughter of Emperor John II Komnenos and sister-in-law to King Stephen IV of Hungary. It would be her relation to the Byzantine emperor that would make her such a desirable match for Baldwin III of Jerusalem. However, it would turn out that their marriage would only last four years, before Baldwin's untimely death. Theodora was now a childless widow at only 17 years of age, and she was no longer a queen.

PLAISANCE OF ANTIOCH

Reigned: 1258-61

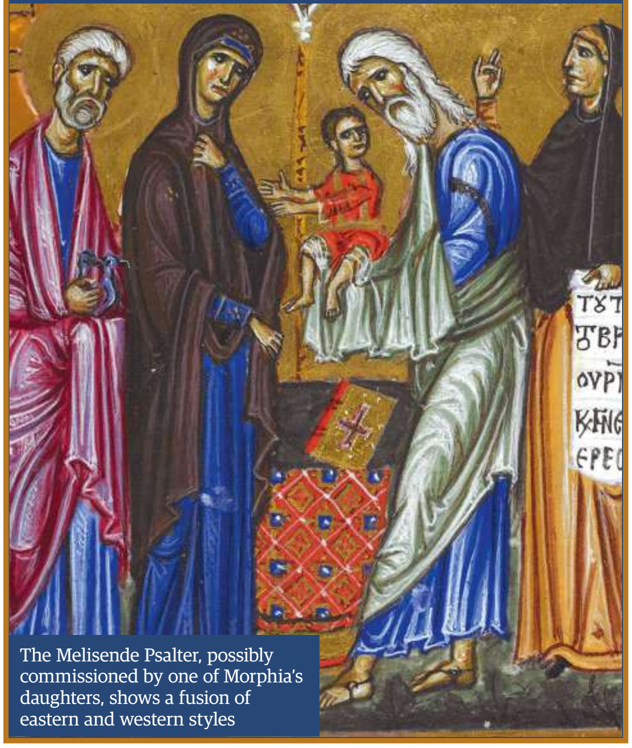
Plaisance was a queen, but not technically of Jerusalem. Her kingdom was Cyprus, of which she was both queen consort and queen regnant. When it came to Jerusalem, her role was as regent. Together with Henry 'the Fat' of Cyprus, Plaisance had a son, Hugh II, who became the underage king of both Cyprus and Jerusalem. Jerusalem's nobles supported Plaisance's regency, and she would successfully hold the position until her death in 1261 – despite becoming John of Jaffa's mistress along the way.

MORPHIA OF MELITENE

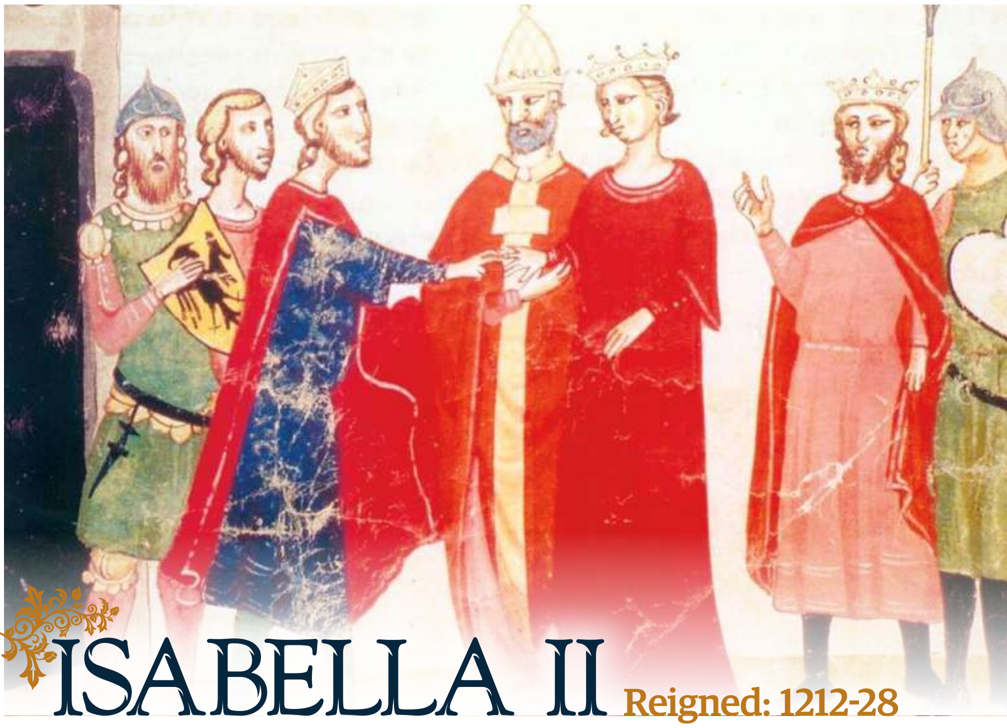
Reigned: 1118-26/27

She was an Armenian, but one day she would sit on Jerusalem's throne. Morphia was born the daughter of an Armenian prince and married a crusader knight, Baldwin, Count of Edessa. That was where they lived until 1118, when Baldwin was elected king of Jerusalem; they moved with their four daughters, Melisende, Alice, Hodierna and Ioveta. In fact, Baldwin delayed his coronation so that Morphia could be crowned alongside him.

As was expected of a woman at the time, Morphia didn't get involved with the day-to-day running of the kingdom. Nonetheless, she was certainly capable – when her husband was captured in 1123, she hired Armenian mercenaries to find out where he was being held. She then took charge of the negotiations, leading to his rescue. When she died in 1126/27, she was sorely missed.



The Melisende Psalter, possibly commissioned by one of Morphia's daughters, shows a fusion of eastern and western styles



ISABELLA II

Reigned: 1212-28

Isabella was only a few days old when she became queen regnant of Jerusalem in 1212. Her mother, Maria of Montferrat, had died, probably from a fever shortly after giving birth, leaving the infant queen in the hands of her father and regent, John of Brienne. By 1223, only 13 years old, marriage was already on the table. Her suitor would be Frederick II, king of Germany and Sicily, a 29-year-old widower who agreed to go on a Crusade, but only as the king of Jerusalem.

They married in Brindisi, Italy, in 1225, and John of Brienne was immediately stripped of his regency. Frederick ruled; the queen regnant didn't get a look in. Things with Frederick weren't good. He kept Isabella with his harem while he delayed his Crusade and was eventually excommunicated as a result. Her first child, a daughter, died before she could celebrate a birthday. Her second child, a son, was the one that killed her. Just like her mother, Isabella died just a few days after his birth in 1228. Frederick remained king while serving as regent for his newborn son.

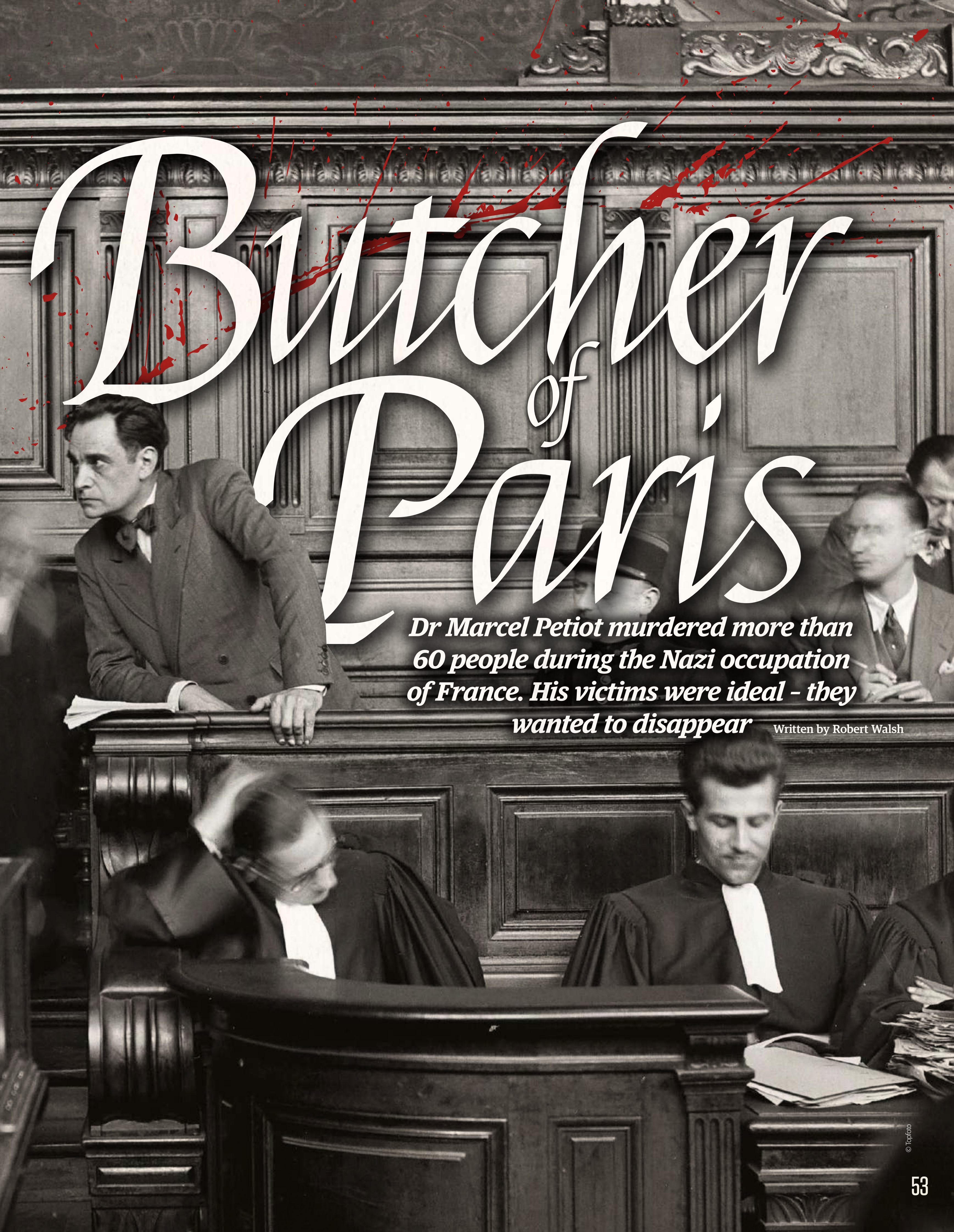
After leaving Jerusalem to marry Frederick, Isabella never returned, even in death – her remains lie in Italy.

51
59
76
58
57
53

Butcher of Paris

Dr Marcel Petiot murdered more than 60 people during the Nazi occupation of France. His victims were ideal – they wanted to disappear

Written by Robert Walsh



© Topfoto

Doctor Marcel Petiot ranks as one of France's worst criminals. Falsely offering escape to South America for Jews, deserters and anyone wanting to avoid the Nazis, Petiot murdered more than 60 people. He chose his victims wisely in order to keep his dark deeds hidden – the people he killed wanted to disappear and, for a price, Petiot usually obliged. They never knew until far too late exactly what price they would pay.

Petiot's early years

Born in Auxerre in 1897, Petiot showed criminal tendencies from childhood. He was diagnosed as mentally ill in 1914, having been expelled from several schools for petty theft and disobedience. Following Petiot's arrest for robbing a postbox a court-appointed psychiatrist described him bluntly as "an abnormal youth suffering from personal and hereditary problems, which limit to a large degree his responsibility for his acts."

That didn't stop the French army conscripting him in 1915 during World War I. Nor did it stop Petiot from continuing his criminal career. He suffered injuries from shrapnel and poison gas while he served, and continued displaying psychological problems. He was sent to military rest homes where he repeatedly stole military supplies and other soldiers' personal property. He also dealt drugs stolen from military hospitals. Caught stealing, he was again diagnosed as mentally ill but, with a crippling casualty rate, the French army simply transferred him to another regiment. Returned to frontline service in June 1918, he lasted until July before a self-inflicted wound ended his career. Further psychiatric problems saw him discharged with a disability pension.

Using a government scheme for veterans, Petiot completed medical school, interned at a psychiatric hospital and entered private practice at Villeneuve-sur-Vonne in 1922. Before long he developed a shady reputation, allegedly defrauding a government health care scheme by billing both it and his patients for treatment. He was also using drugs, accused of dealing drugs and providing then-illegal abortions.

His first murder?

His first probable victim was his lover Louise Delaveau. She disappeared in May 1926. Neighbours claimed to have seen Petiot loading a trunk into his expensive sports car and Delaveau was never seen again. Police dismissed Delaveau as a runaway, despite a similar trunk being found in a nearby river containing the dismembered remains of a young woman who was never identified. In 1926, Petiot was elected town mayor, but reports of his embezzling of public funds saw him suspended in 1931. During this time, he also married and fathered a son. No longer mayor, Petiot somehow secured election as a local councillor in October 1931, a position he also abused by stealing electricity from the town's supply. By the time he was accused of that in 1932, it didn't matter. Petiot had already departed for Paris under a very dark cloud.

In 1930, Henriette Debauve was murdered at her home in Villeneuve-sur-Vonne. Police considered it a murder committed during a robbery despite local gossip suggesting Petiot was her lover. One local man, Monsieur Fiscot, thought the doctor responsible and claimed to have seen him near the house at the time of the murder. Fiscot had made two fatal mistakes: he had said it publicly, and he was one of Petiot's patients. During a consultation for rheumatism, Petiot gave Fiscot an injection from which he conveniently died. Petiot listed the cause of death as an aneurysm. His increasing notoriety in mind, Petiot then departed for the City of Lights itself, Paris.

Before long some old patterns resurfaced. Rumours of drug abuse, drug dealing using fraudulent prescriptions, and illegal abortions began floating around his medical practice in the Rue Lesueur. Suggestions of continued petty theft and tax evasion also surfaced. Despite the rumours, Petiot was appointed Medecin d'Etat-civil for the 9th district of Paris. The new position also gave him power to sign exactly the documents he needed to take his career to the height of profit and the depths of depravity: death certificates.

Mass-murder for money

The Nazi occupation in 1940 made Petiot's killing spree a great deal easier. The Nazis conscripted thousands of people as forced labourers and Petiot supplied false medical certificates exempting people from deportation, for a price. It also struck him, given the Nazis' reputation for brutality, that many people would want to disappear. It's far easier to commit murder when your victims don't want to be found, and many military deserters, Jews, communists and others wanted to survive by disappearing. For 25,000 Francs a head, Petiot disappeared them in considerable numbers.

His scheme was simple. He used local crooks to guide anyone wanting to escape occupied France in his direction. With that in mind, Petiot engaged local builders to convert the basement of his property, adding a large furnace and an airtight room. Petiot already knew that charging 25,000 Francs was only the start. Fleeing for their lives, fugitives would doubtless arrive carrying all their valuables – cash, clothes, gold, jewellery, uncut gems, everything. This was a stream of well-heeled victims actively wanting to vanish, and from whom Petiot would profit enormously.

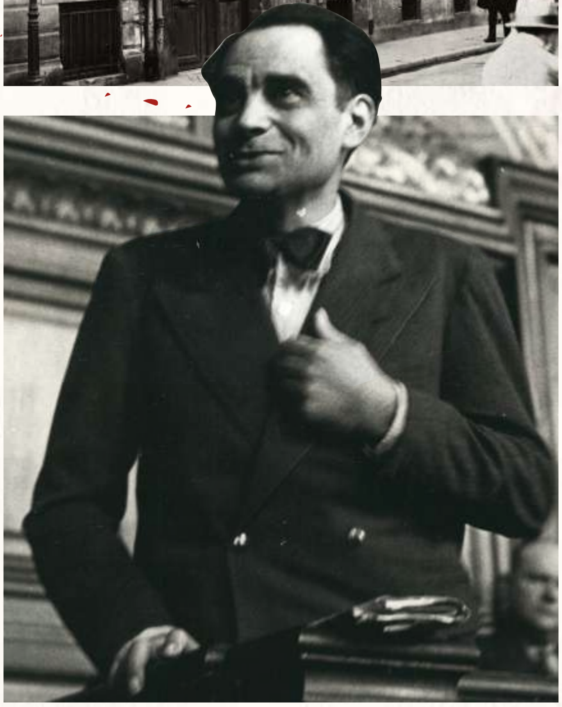
His modus operandi was equally simple. On arrival, Petiot escorted the fugitives to the airtight room (which was,

ZYKLON
GIFTGAS!
DEGESCH
ZYKLON
GIFTGAS!
ZYKLON

RIGHT-INSET Originally a commercial insecticide, Zyklon-B was adopted by the Nazis for the Holocaust. Petiot used it and cyanide as his weapon of choice

RIGHT We'll never know exactly how many died at his hands. Police spent weeks unearthing his victims and a huge array of unidentified body parts

> "The police realised Petiot wasn't a patriot but was in fact one of the worst mass-murderers in French history"



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he said, a safe hiding place) then took the 25,000 Francs per client. That done, he explained that the officials of Argentina (their supposed destination) expected all new arrivals to be vaccinated against infectious diseases. He would insist he inoculate them immediately. His 'cure-all' was simple but effective: cyanide.

There was a back-up option if the cyanide failed. Contrary to myth, cyanide isn't always instantly fatal or even fatal at all. With his victims in an airtight room, Petiot could turn on a concealed gas tap, turning the room into a gas chamber. He even installed a hidden peephole so he could watch them die. Once stripped of cash and valuables, they were cremated. Early victims disappeared into the River Seine before Petiot added the furnace and a pit filled with quicklime.

The Gestapo close in

Petiot was still dealing drugs and, in 1942, was fined 2,400 Francs for dealing using fraudulent prescriptions. It might have been much worse if two addicts expected to testify against him hadn't mysteriously disappeared. Petiot also carried on killing, using accomplices Raoul Fourrier, Edmond Pintard and Rene-Gustave Nezondet to lure a steady stream of victims. Until, that is, his supposed 'Fly-Tox' escape network (named, appropriately, after a particularly toxic pesticide) was targeted by the Gestapo.

Petiot's underlings weren't as discreet as he'd expected. Nor were the Gestapo as slow and clumsy. By early 1943, they knew about Fly-Tox and its leader 'Dr Eugene' (Petiot's alias). Believing Fly-Tox was a genuine escape line out of the country, they were determined to shut it down. In April 1943, Gestapo officer Robert Jodkum forced Jewish prisoner Yvan Dreyfus to infiltrate the operation. Dreyfus approached Petiot, then vanished. Furious, Jodkum sent infiltrator Robert Beretta, who was more successful. Petiot, Nezondet, Fourrier and Pintard were arrested in May.

They were tortured for information on Petiot's nonexistent Resistance group. The Gestapo extracted no information (none of them had any) but did discover that Petiot was murdering his clients, not saving them. Regarding the doctor as doing their job for them, the Gestapo turned a blind eye, releasing him in January 1944. It would be just two more months before he was caught again.

TOP Petiot's surgery was at 21 Rue Lesueur, where he murdered as many as 160 people

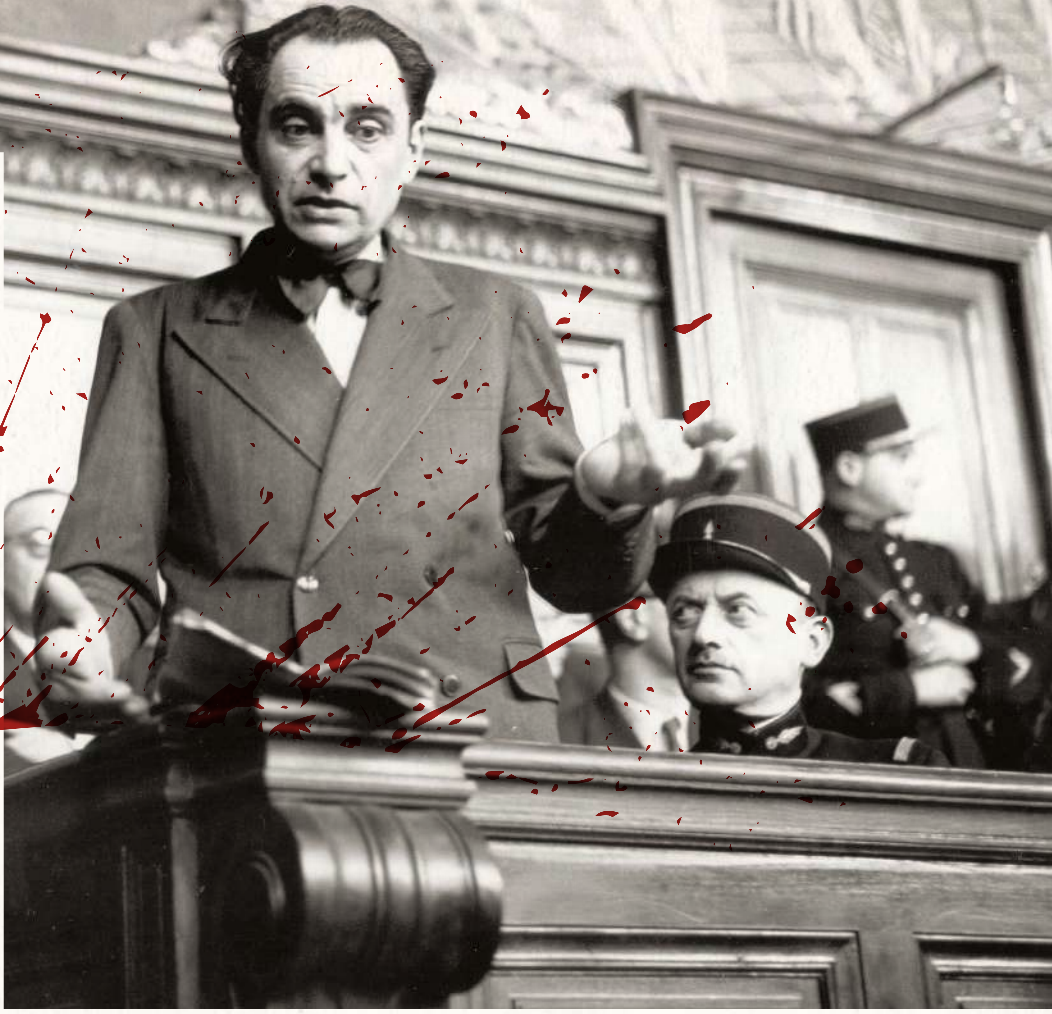
ABOVE Petiot testified in his own defence against overwhelming scientific evidence and witness testimony. He seemed to know that the verdict was almost a foregone conclusion

Exposure and escape

The murderer was finally exposed on 11 March 1944. Neighbours in the Rue Leseuer reported a foul smell and thick smoke billowing from his property. A note on the door claimed Petiot had gone away for a month. Firefighters entered the building and discovered the furnace burning furiously with a human arm hanging out of it. They found various body parts, bones, drugs and poisons, but Petiot was gone. Police contacted him and he agreed to meet them.

Petiot was cunning. Having duped the Gestapo by playing on their prejudices, now he claimed his victims were traitors, Nazi infiltrators and informers. He claimed extensive links with the Resistance and that by killing enemies of France, he was doing his patriotic duty. The police, many of who were Resistance sympathisers, released him. Petiot ▶

ABOVE-LEFT 47 suitcases were seized by the police, containing clothing identified by the relatives of Petiot's victims



ABOVE-RIGHT Petiot's story was farcical. His defence was as weak as the prosecution case was airtight. At times he seemed close to losing his composure in court

disappeared before the police were able to identify some of his many victims. Once they had, they realised Petiot wasn't a patriot but was in fact one of the worst mass-murderers in French history.

The manhunt lasted seven months and Petiot's crimes became an international media sensation. His story appeared in many newspapers in France and abroad, despite the bloodshed of WWII. Although thousands died every day, Petiot was still front-page news, especially in Europe. A foolish letter to one of those newspapers would prove his undoing.

Still a fugitive, Petiot joined the French Forces of the Interior in August 1944 under the alias 'Henri Valery'. He specialised in interrogations and counter-intelligence, being promoted to captain. In a bizarre twist, when the hunt for Petiot was at its height, 'Capitaine Henri Valery' was one of the searchers.

The newspaper *Resistance* denounced Petiot as a mass-murderer. Petiot, still hoping to escape justice, sent a letter via his defence lawyer from the 1942 drugs charge. He bitterly attacked the story as a tissue of lies. His letter didn't convince police, but it did tell them he was still in France and probably in or near Paris.

Petiot's luck runs out

The fugitive was finally caught on 31 October 1944 after being recognised at a Paris Metro station – Halloween being an entirely appropriate date. Searching him, police found a pistol, 31,700 Francs in cash and 50 sets of identity papers in six different names. Having told the Gestapo he was killing their enemies before claiming that he was in fact killing enemies of France, Petiot twisted his story again for the Paris police. Now, he claimed, members of his nonexistent Resistance group were responsible for the carnage at the Rue Lesueur. When his conflicting stories were checked against each other, Petiot was finished. He was remanded for trial.

His trial began on 19 March 1946. His lawyer, Rene Floriot, had little to work with and it showed. Faced with state prosecutors assisted by 12 civil lawyers representing relatives of his victims, Petiot answered 135 separate charges. Floriot claimed many of Petiot's victims were alive in South America under false identities. Petiot himself claimed that, of the 27 sets of human remains found at his medical practice, 19 were Nazi agents, traitors or collaborators. Referring to collaborators and the Vichy government, he said: "I got my hands dirty all right, but I didn't soil them by holding them up to swear oaths of allegiance."

Prosecutors accused Petiot of at least 60 murders, suspecting him of dozens more, but he was tried for the 27 discovered at the Rue Lesueur. They introduced multitudes of forensic evidence: bones, body parts, drugs, poisons, cases of clothes and belongings all discovered at Petiot's home and medical practice. The evidence was overwhelming. His claims to have worked for the Resistance, on the other hand, were almost entirely unsupported. Petiot was convicted of 26 murders on 4 April 1946 and lodged at La Sante Prison to await execution.

His appeal was rejected on 15 May, also his execution date. It was delayed due to the guillotine malfunctioning but, on 25 May 1946, the man known worldwide as 'Doctor Satan', 'The Butcher of Paris' and sundry other headline-friendly nicknames finally faced the executioner.

One of the witnesses was Dr Albert Paul, who testified at the trial. He described Petiot's attitude: "For the first time in my life I saw a man leaving Death Row, if not dancing, at least showing perfect calm... Petiot moved with ease, as though he were walking into his office for a routine appointment." Petiot seemed perfectly calm. At wife Georgette's urging, he met the prison chaplain shortly before his execution, stating: "I am not a religious man and my conscience is clear," which is almost certainly because he didn't actually have one. ○

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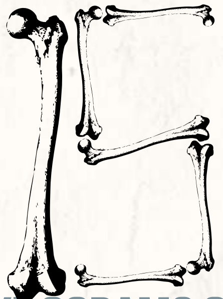
Petiot's Macabre Mortuary

While investigating the Butcher of Paris' heinous crimes, police recovered an astonishing amount of grisly evidence in and around Petoit's home

2,000

PIECES OF VICTIMS' CLOTHING

The approximate amount found in Petiot's possession, probably the tip of the iceberg



KILOGRAMS OF CHARRED BONES

Discovered at his medical practice in the Rue Lesueur

11kg

OF UNBURNED HUMAN FRAGMENTS

Also found at his former medical practice

9

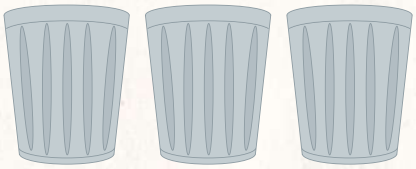
SEVERED HEADS

Found in the River Seine with sundry other body parts

5kg

OF HUMAN HAIR

Found and presented as evidence at his trial



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GARBAGE CANS OF UNIDENTIFIED BODY PARTS

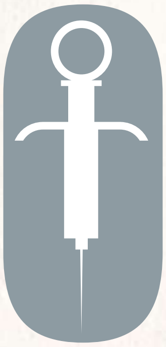
Recovered from the Rue Lesueur

10

WHOLE SCALPS (AT LEAST)

Nobody knows why Petiot scalped some of his victims

50



TIMES THE STANDARD DOCTOR'S STOCK OF HEROIN AND MORPHINE

Discovered at the Rue Lesueur, probably for drug-dealing

16

CORPSES LAID OUT IN PETIOT'S BASEMENT

According to accomplice Jean-Gustave Nezondet

26

MURDER CONVICTIONS

He was probably responsible for many more

Killing the killer

The 'Man from Paris' was France's executioner between 1939 and 1951, responsible for executing many of the people Petiot claimed to be allied with

There's a certain irony in Petiot (who claimed to have killed collaborators) being executed by Jules-Henri Desfourneaux (who actually was one). Desfourneaux became chief executioner after the death of his predecessor Anatole Deibler in 1939, performing France's last public execution (that of serial killer Eugen Weidmann) in September of that year. During the occupation, he continued working under the collaborationist Vichy government and, aside from ordinary criminals, Desfourneaux also executed communists and Resistance fighters including Marcel Langer. Langer's execution caused Desfourneaux's assistants Andre Obrecht (also his cousin) and Georges and Robert Martin to resign in protest.

Desfourneaux avoided post-war punishment for his role during the occupation but developed an increasing drink problem, dying in October 1951 while still in office. Obrecht returned in 1945 and resigned again in 1947, still feuding with Desfourneaux. He succeeded Desfourneaux as 'Monsieur de Paris' until 1976. Obrecht resigned suffering from Parkinson's disease and died in 1985.

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CHARLEMAGNE

A NEW KIND OF KING

Who was the Frankish ruler who conquered most of Europe and became the emperor of Rome?

Written by Emily Staniforth

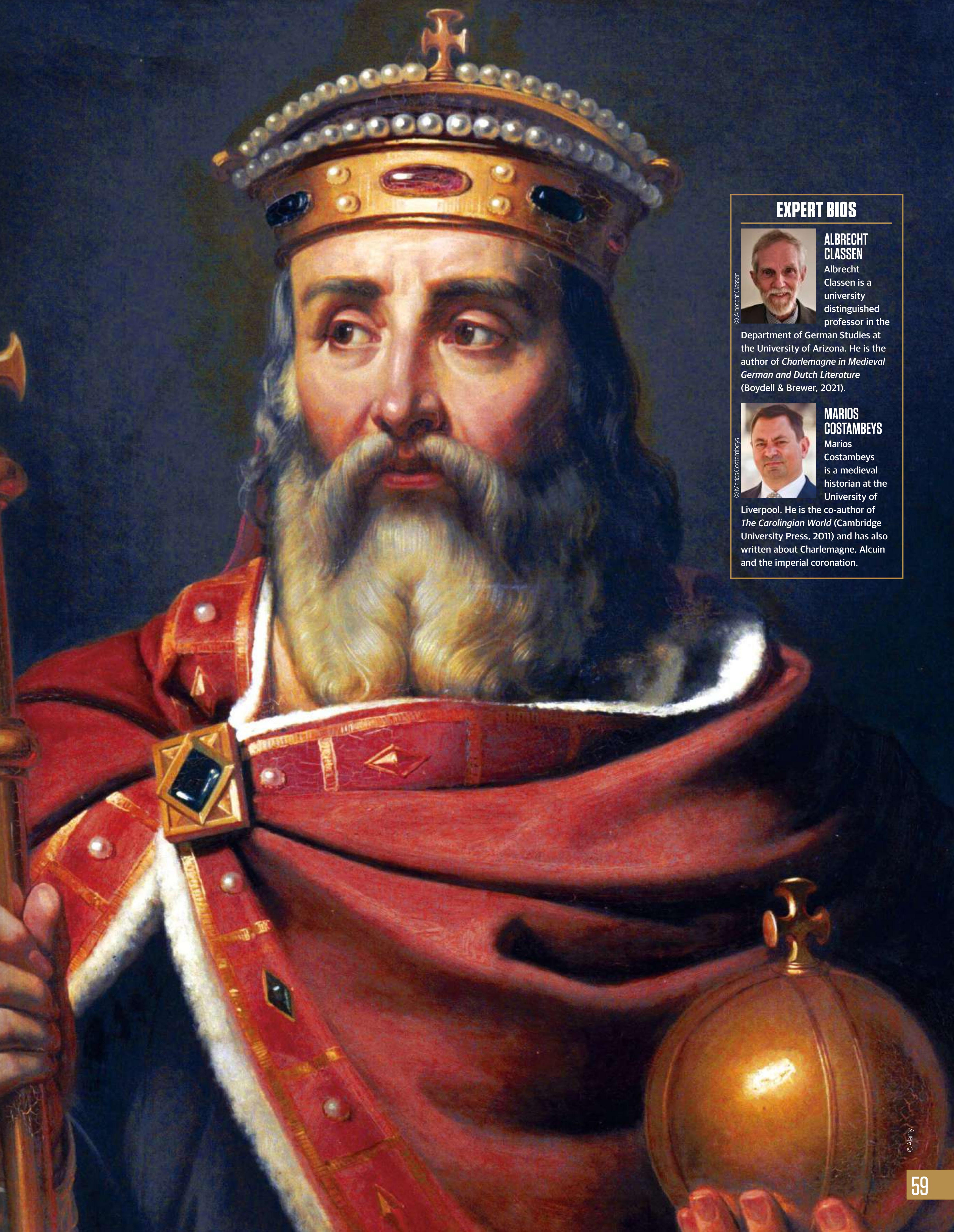
Charlemagne, sometimes referred to as Charles the Great, was a mighty ruler who, by the end of his life, reigned over the vast Carolingian Empire that spanned across Europe. He became king of the Franks in 768 and set off on his quest to expand his domain, conquering much of Europe during his 46-year reign. During his life, he laid the foundations for an empire that would last for nearly a millennium and established a new kind of rulership that would inspire a new generation of European kings, reshaping monarchical rule across the continent.

In the centuries before Charlemagne was born, the Roman Empire dominated the political and geographical landscape of Western Europe. However, in the 4th century Roman influence in Europe drastically diminished as the Germanic-speaking peoples repeatedly fought against Rome's control. One of these groups, the Franks, many of whom had settled in Gaul (modern-day France and parts of Belgium, western Germany and northern Italy) after various uprisings against the Romans had been defeated, consolidated their authority under the rule of a series of kings. The Merovingian Dynasty invaded neighbouring territories, defeating tribes to the south such as the Burgundians and Visigoths, to expand their growing kingdom.

> "CHARLEMAGNE UTILISED VIOLENCE TO ASSERT HIS POWER OVER HIS SUBJECTS"

However, by the end of the 7th century, the Merovingian kings held little power and authority over their lands. The Frankish territories were very rarely united under a single ruler and bitter internal fighting between the various kings had created a landscape of instability and dissension. Instead, authority was held by the mayors of the palace, who fulfilled a role similar to that of a prime minister. Charles Martel, the grandfather of Charlemagne, held this office and began to dominate both the eastern and western sides of the vast kingdom, beginning the gradual takeover by the Carolingian Dynasty.

Charlemagne's father, Pippin, finally deposed the Merovingian dynasty and made himself king in 751. Pippin claimed to have gained papal approval for the deposition of the Merovingians, although there are only Frankish sources that record this (as described by medieval historian Jennifer R Davis in *Charlemagne's Practice of Empire*). In 753, however, both Frankish and papal sources record that the pope travelled to Francia for the first time and an alliance was formed. The pope declared the Frankish kings should only be chosen from the Carolingian line from that point onwards, and in return the Franks would support the papal states against pressure from the Lombards in Italy.



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EXPERT BIOS

ALBRECHT CLASSEN

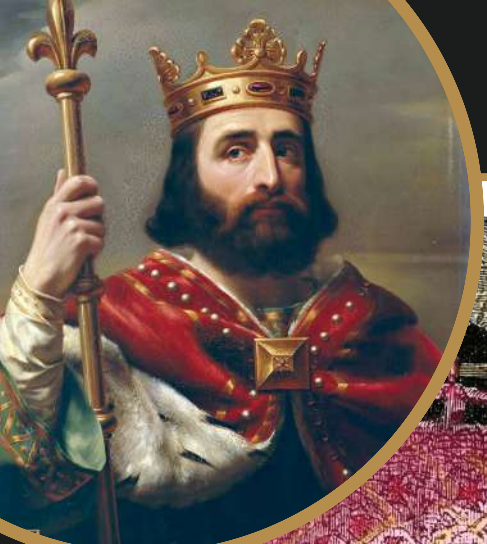
© Albrecht Classen

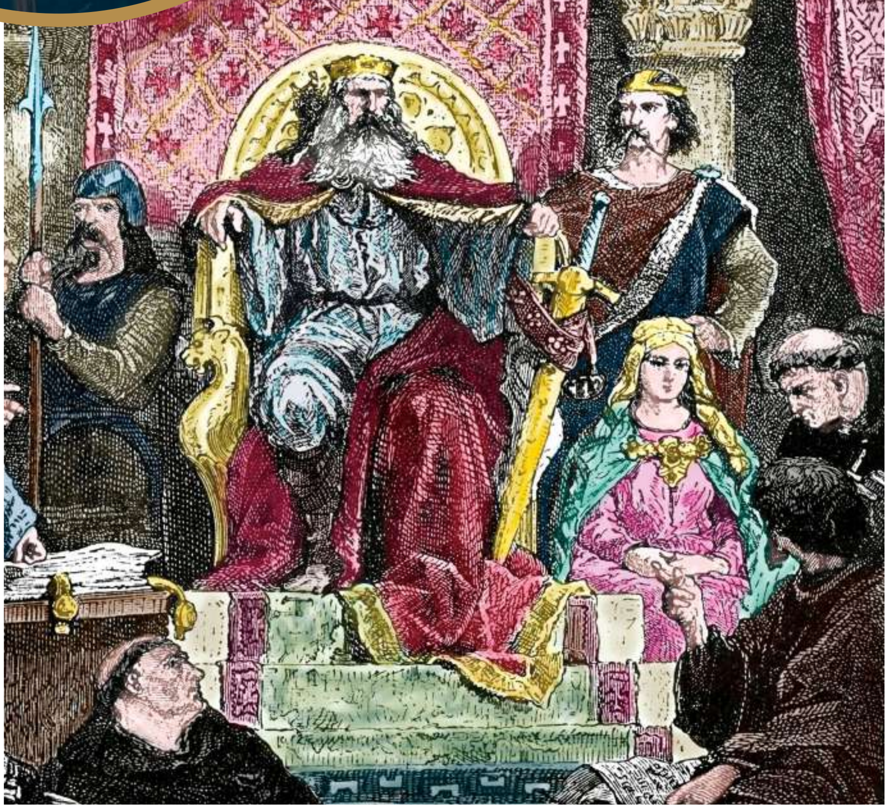
Albrecht Classen is a university distinguished professor in the Department of German Studies at the University of Arizona. He is the author of *Charlemagne in Medieval German and Dutch Literature* (Boydell & Brewer, 2021).

MARIOS COSTAMBEYS

© Marios Costambeys

Marios Costambeys is a medieval historian at the University of Liverpool. He is the co-author of *The Carolingian World* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) and has also written about Charlemagne, Alcuin and the imperial coronation.





CHARLEMAGNE'S EARLY LIFE

Charlemagne was born to Pippin and Bertrada of Laon in around 749, although the exact date of his birth is unknown. As for what Charlemagne's early life was like, we can only guess. The Frankish scholar, Einhard, who was a contemporary of Charlemagne and had served in his court, wrote in his biography of the great king: "It would be folly, I think, to write a word concerning Charles' birth and infancy, or even his boyhood, for nothing has ever been written on the subject, and there is no one alive now who can give information on it." Einhard wrote his biography of Charlemagne, the *Vita Karoli Magni*, after the emperor's death in 814, though historians cannot agree on a specific date. Nevertheless, it makes clear that Charlemagne's childhood was a mystery to his contemporaries as well as modern scholars.

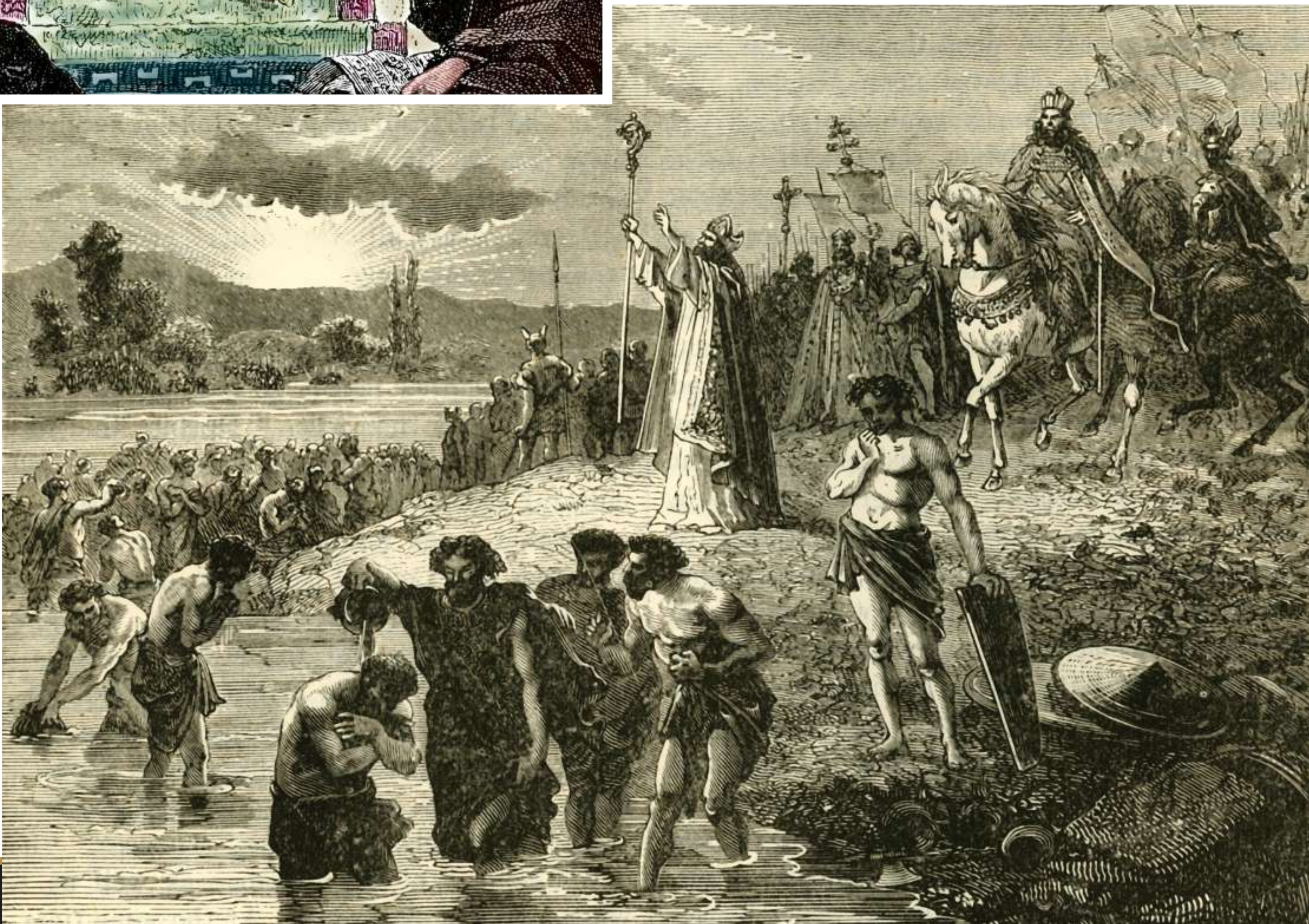
"We don't have that many resources," says Dr Albrecht Classen, university distinguished professor of German Studies at the University of Arizona. "He was simply raised as a young nobleman and learned all the various skills, military and athletic. He never learned to write so he could barely sign his documents, just with clumsy handwriting, but that was not his forte." It is believed that the young Charlemagne's education would have incorporated many Christian elements that would prove to be particularly pertinent to his later endeavours of religious reform across Europe. He was raised to serve God, and believed that he was granted his secular authority by the grace of God.

Charlemagne inherited half of his father's dominion upon his death in 768. Einhard wrote that it was agreed by a council of the people that the Frankish kingdom would be divided equally between Pippin's two sons. Charlemagne's brother, Carloman, inherited the eastern half, while Charlemagne inherited the west. The relationship between the two Frankish kings was fractious. "Many of Carloman's party kept trying to disturb their good understanding, and there were some even who plotted to involve

ABOVE-INSET Charlemagne's father, Pippin, king of the Franks

ABOVE A 19th century engraving of Charlemagne on his throne

RIGHT Saxons were baptised into Christianity after their defeat by Charlemagne



CHARLEMAGNE'S CAPITAL

The mighty king established his seat of power in Aachen

Favoured by Charlemagne as his preferred royal residence, the city of Aachen underwent a transformation during the Carolingian period. Originally called Aquisgranum by the Romans and used as a spa town, Aachen now sits in western Germany and borders Belgium and the Netherlands. Under Charlemagne's rule, Aachen became a centre for learning and culture. It was in Aachen that a magnificent imperial palace was built, which was the central base from which Charlemagne ruled over his vast empire. A masterpiece of Carolingian architecture, the palace complex consisted of many different buildings. It was at this palace that a school was established, of which Charlemagne's friend and advisor Alcuin of York was at the head.

Today, much of the imperial palace no longer exists, though Charlemagne's impressive Palatine Chapel has been preserved as part of Aachen's Cathedral. Inside the chapel, the decor remains largely unchanged from the time of Charlemagne and is a model of Carolingian architecture. The stone throne, known as the Throne of Charlemagne and which still sits at the heart of the chapel, was used as the coronation seat for Holy Roman Emperors from the Middle Ages through to the 16th century.

them in a war with each other," wrote Einhard. At the beginning of his reign Charlemagne showed no signs of the extraordinary ruler he would become, but that all changed in 771 when Carloman's premature death saved the kingdom from civil war and thrust Charlemagne into an increased position of power as he was proclaimed the sole ruler of all the Frankish territories.

EXPANDING THE FRANKISH KINGDOM

Almost immediately after his accession as the sole king of the Franks, Charlemagne set out to secure his lands against neighbouring forces who had been making continuous attempts to seize Frankish territory. This campaign began with a long and bloody war against the Saxons, who had also caused problems for Charlemagne's father. In 772, Charlemagne's forces marched into Saxony (modern northern Germany) for the first time. A series of expeditions resulted in the establishment of a permanent military presence in a fortified borderland, also known as a 'march', in Western Saxony.

"IT IS POSSIBLE THAT CHARLEMAGNE HAD LONG-STANDING AMBITIONS TO BECOME EMPEROR"

Charlemagne's military mission also provided him with an opportunity to spread Christianity to a traditionally pagan area of Europe. There had been several previous attempts to Christianise Saxony before his rule, but it was Charlemagne and his forces who succeeded in spreading Christianity across the march and in wider Saxony. Charlemagne's Christianisation of the Saxons was a personal success for the emperor. He had neutralised the threat they posed to his territories and converted them to the Christian faith. During the decades-long war in Saxony, Charlemagne's military expansion continued across other areas of Europe. In 774, his conquest of the Lombards in Northern Italy resulted in him being crowned king there. In 778, he conquered Bavaria, absorbing it into his expanding domain.

The Avars, a society who had settled in Eastern Europe on the River Danube and are sometimes referred to as the successors of the Huns, provoked Charlemagne by their continued raids into Bavaria after it had been swallowed by Charlemagne's growing territories. He launched a war with the Avars, aiming to secure his newly acquired lands in Italy and Germany with which the Avars shared a border and to consolidate his authority over his new subjects. The Saxons and other defeated tribes sent troops to fight in this war, bringing together Charlemagne's people under one cause. His campaign against the Avars was successful and they too were absorbed into Charlemagne's vast empire in around 796.

Keeping order over such a huge territory was a monumental task for any ruler, but it was Charlemagne's sophisticated administrative organisation that allowed him to maintain his authority and crush opposition in the various states across Europe. "This was a face-to-face society so he spent an awful lot of time in the saddle," says Dr Marios Costambeys, a medieval historian from the University of Liverpool. "For the first two decades of his reign he was moving around because face-to-face contact was important and the aristocrats would certainly come to him, but he also made sure they knew that he might turn up. In practice, this involved a massive logistical exercise because the royal court travelled around mostly Northern Europe like a plague of locusts. It would establish itself in one place, eat that place dry and then move on."

Charlemagne was also highly aware of the critical role of the church in consolidating his power of his growing empire. He used the structures within the church to administrate and maintain control across his lands. "He was fully aware that the church could help him because the bishops or priests or deacons were not necessarily interested in secular power but they were educated and they were supported by Charlemagne, who had first-rate administrators all over his country," says Classen.

As well as using his administrative skills, Charlemagne utilised violence to assert his power over his subjects. In his war with Saxony he committed atrocities against those he was trying to conquer, most notably at the Massacre of Verden in 782, where

▶

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he is said to have ordered the killing of around 4,500 Saxons. Einhard makes no mention of the massacre in his biography, but does allude to Charlemagne's brutality on several occasions. On the other hand, Charlemagne largely allowed the populations he conquered to function as they had done previously. He would only tend to intervene if his new subjects revolted, but if they remained peaceful they were left alone.

EMPEROR OF THE ROMANS

Charlemagne's relationship with the church continued to blossom as his reign continued. Using Christianity as a unifying tool across his domain made him popular with the papacy and in turn the pope supported him in his territorial expansion. Hadrian I, who was pope for the majority of Charlemagne's reign, had a positive relationship with the king. Charlemagne established monasteries and cathedrals throughout his territories and, like his father before him, offered protection to the pope in return for the pope's continued patronage. This patronage culminated in Charlemagne being proclaimed as emperor of the Romans, the first since the fall of the Roman Empire. The coronation was said to be the result of Charlemagne's intervention to save Pope Leo III, with whom he had a less-close relationship than with Hadrian, when Leo was attacked by hostile factions in Rome. In 799, the pope fled to Charlemagne's court after his enemies tried to blind him in the street and Charlemagne arranged for the pope to safely return to Rome. He set about fixing the problem and in 800 Charlemagne travelled to Rome and organised for Pope Leo to publicly swear an oath to eradicate the charges of misconduct against him.

> "CHARLEMAGNE BECAME A TOUCHSTONE FOR EUROPEAN KINGSHIP"

"There was a lot of conflict between the pope and the local dynasties. [Charlemagne] kind of cut through all of this, in a way brilliantly, as the outsider and not caring about the local squabbles. Instead he moved ahead and set up his superior power," explains Classen.

On Christmas Day 800, Pope Leo thanked Charlemagne by anointing him as emperor in some kind of ceremony, the exact nature of which is unclear. Contemporary accounts of the occasion are contradictory, and the root of Charlemagne's coronation being his intervention in the pope's disputes has also been questioned. Given the nature of the relationship between Charlemagne and the papacy, it is possible that he had long-standing ambitions to become emperor. "Almost nobody believes what his biographer says, which is that when he goes to Rome and is crowned this is a complete surprise to him and that he didn't expect it. There are lots of signs that, in fact, this was all being set up for a couple of years beforehand. So the idea of some kind of imperial ceremony is already in place before Leo's more immediate difficulties," says Costambeys.

The title Charlemagne was given in this ceremony was not that of 'Holy Roman Emperor', though that is the title that has been remembered. The title of emperor granted firstly to Charlemagne would eventually evolve over the centuries into that of leader of the Holy Roman Empire, which did not exist during Charlemagne's time. Despite this, the title was still a significant moment for Charlemagne as he was the first non-Italian, non-Roman emperor in Europe, appointed by the pope and thus God, which helped to consolidate his authority throughout his empire.

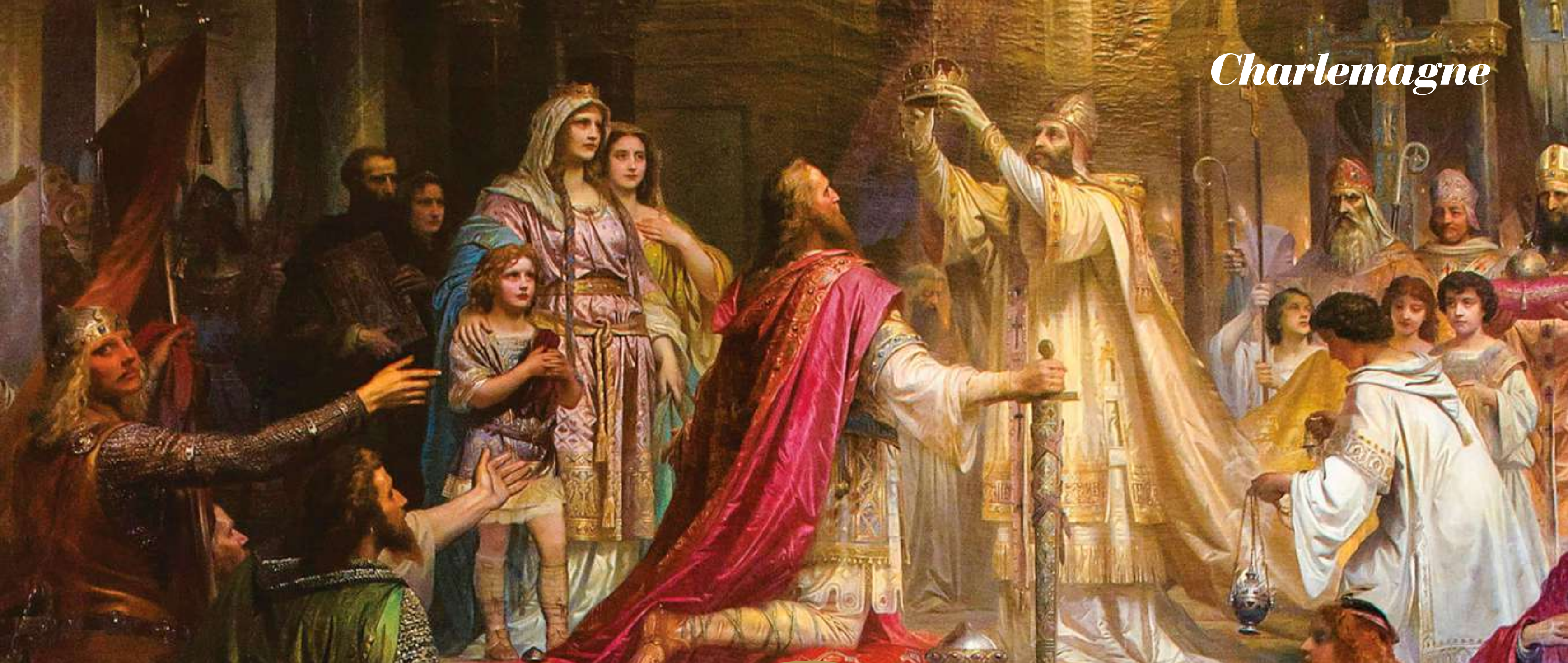
THE CAROLINGIAN RENAISSANCE

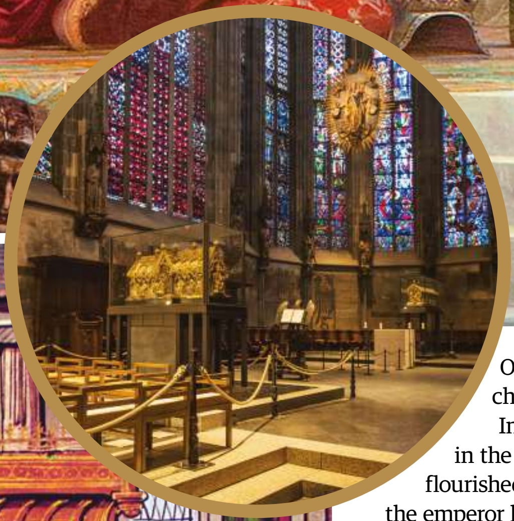
The Carolingian Renaissance is one of the aspects of Charlemagne's reign celebrated by scholars and historians as a triumph of his tenure. He prioritised education and set up schools across Europe for his subjects, especially those in the church who would become politically useful serving in his Christian administrative network. "He called in the first major school master, Alcuin of York," says Classen. "Alcuin of York basically set up a school and once that school had graduated some students they became abbots. They set up their own monasteries and each monastery had its own school.

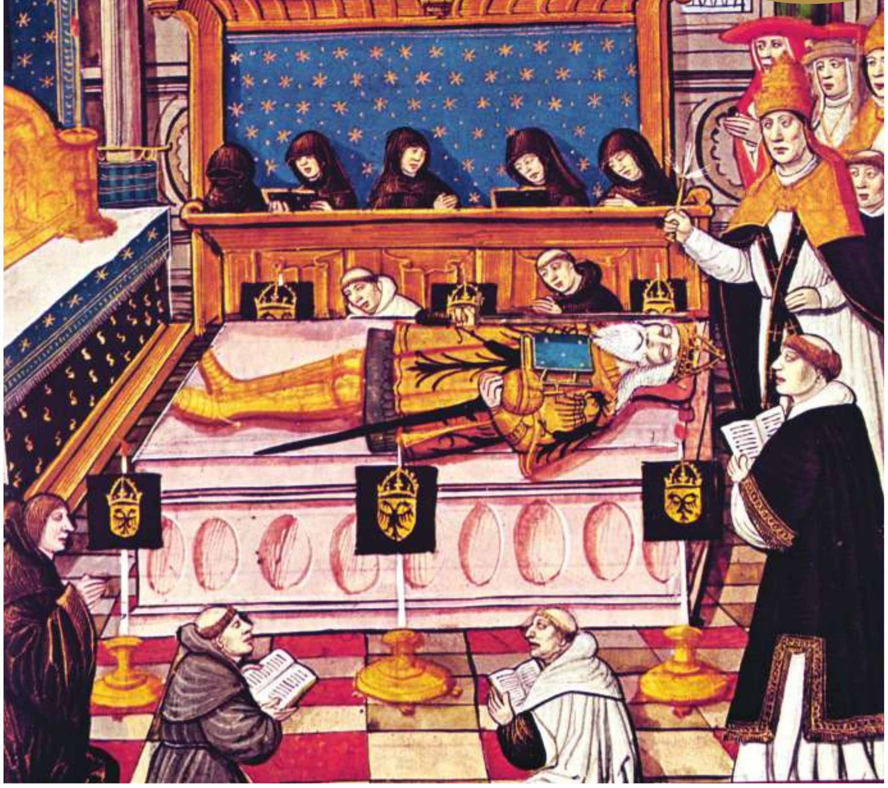
THE CHARLEMAGNE PRIZE

How Charlemagne's legacy still promotes a united Europe

In 1950, the Charlemagne Prize was established by the city of Aachen to reward those who had contributed in a significant way to the promotion of European unity. The prize highlights the legacy of Charlemagne as a positive unifying force across the continent and has been awarded to a range of political figures over the years. While the prize celebrates European unity, it is important to remember that Charlemagne achieved his empire as a result of force and violence, and imposing Christianity on societies who had very little choice in the matter. Charlemagne's methods by which he united Europe are not the greatest model for the diverse and democratic Europe of today, nevertheless the emperor serves as a fitting figure for this prize because geographically his empire made up what is now the modern European Union. Some of the people who have been awarded the Charlemagne Prize include Winston Churchill in 1956, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1987, former Polish prime minister Donald Tusk in 2010, and Pope Francis in 2016.







TOP Charlemagne's imperial coronation in Rome

ABOVE-INSET The Carolingian Octagon of the Palatine Chapel in Aachen Cathedral

ABOVE This 14th century miniature depicts the death of Charlemagne

Out of those schools came new abbots for other churches. So it spread all over the country."

Inspired partly by the culture of the Roman Empire in the 4th century, art, architecture and literature flourished throughout the Carolingian Empire, despite the emperor himself being illiterate. "He did not learn himself very much but he promoted the arts, architecture and sculpture. It all served his own fame. He promoted schools and the spread of learning, but he himself did not acquire those basic skills," says Classen. This renaissance, or "correctio" as the Carolingians referred to it, also helped Charlemagne promote Christian learning in a religious and cultural capacity. His investment in monastic schools and the production of manuscripts and documents allowed for wider access to biblical and liturgical knowledge.

CHARLEMAGNE'S LEGACY

Charlemagne died in 814 and left his throne to his son, Louis the Pious, who'd been acting as co-emperor as his father's health declined in the later years of his life. Charlemagne had created an empire that was the envy of the medieval world and had united most of Europe under his rule. After his death, he became a touchstone for European kingship, inspiring future leaders like Napoleon Bonaparte, who saw Charlemagne's reign as an ideal example of imperialism. He was elevated to a legendary status and mythologised as the perfect example of kingship, much like the mythical King Arthur in England.

"He very quickly becomes a model. He's the reference point for rulership in Europe, certainly Latin Christian Europe, for over 1,000 years after. He was constantly being referenced by later medieval kings and emperors, but also those in the early modern and modern periods, up to and including dictators of the mid-20th century," says Costambeys. The Holy Roman Empire, which evolved from Charlemagne's establishment of the Carolingian Empire, continued under a succession of emperors until 1806, almost 1,000 years after Charlemagne's death. ○

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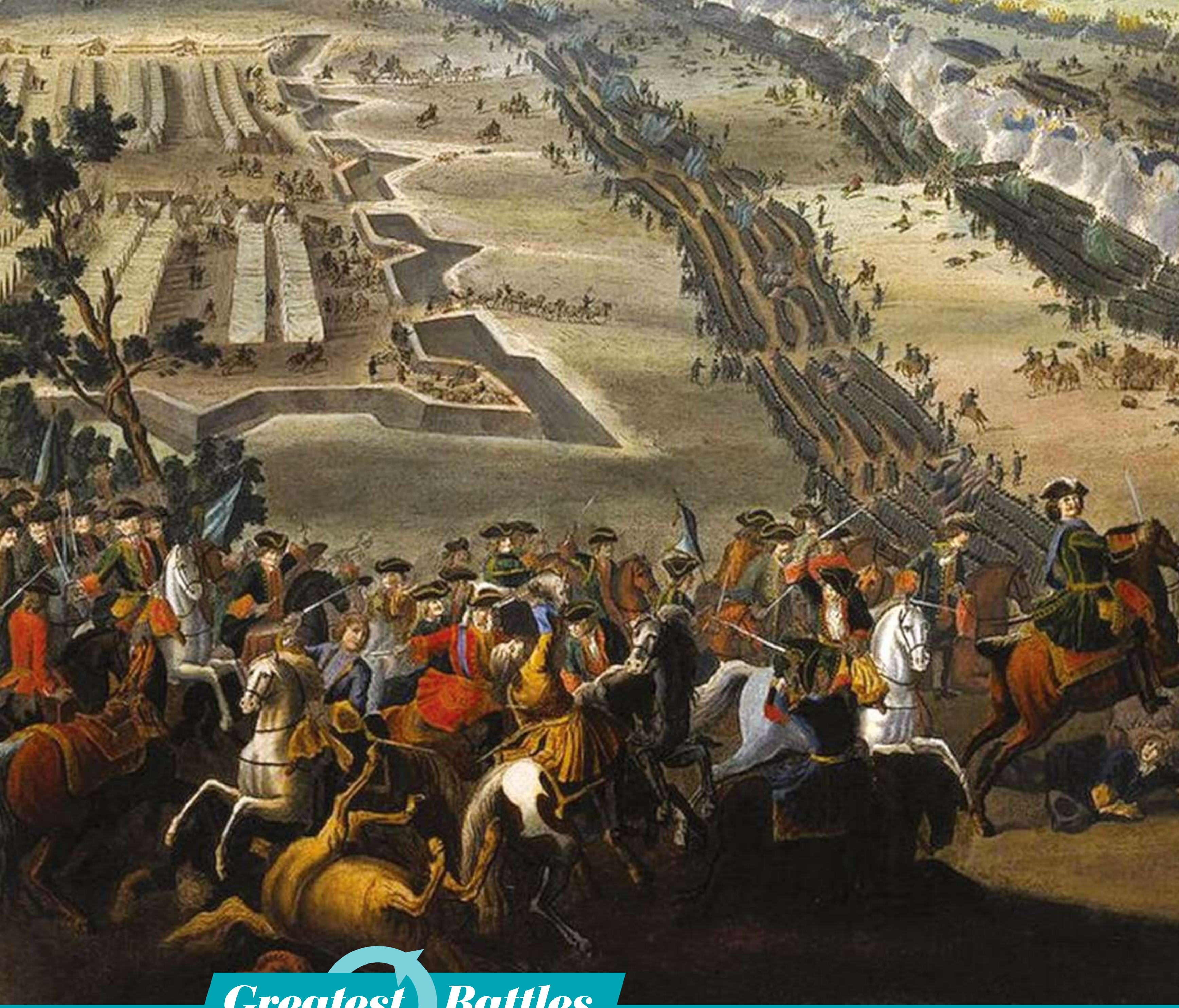


Greatest Battles

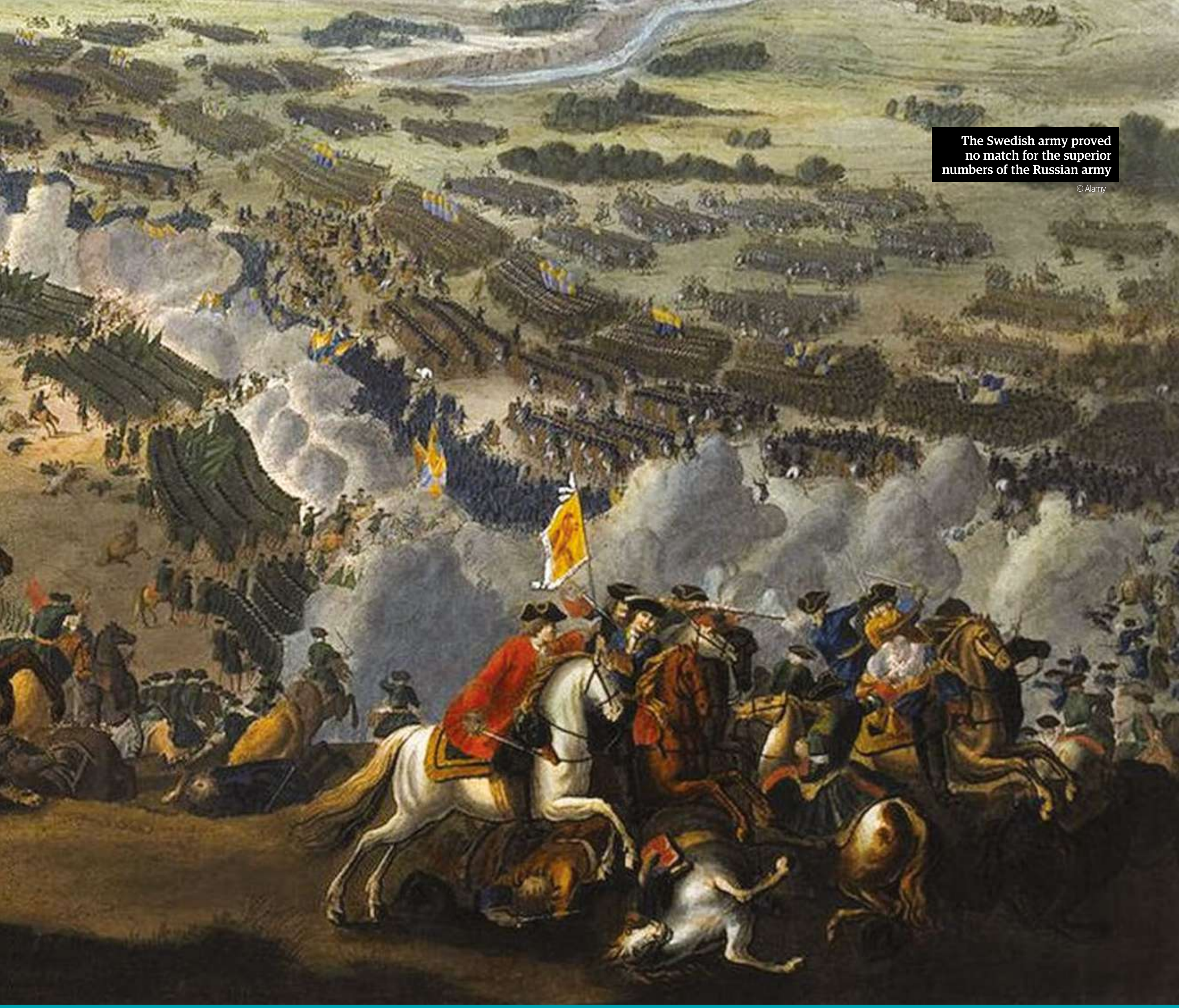
BATTLE OF POLTAVA

COSSACK HETMANATE (MODERN-DAY UKRAINE), 27 JUNE 1709

Written by William E Welsh

The Battle of Poltava would decide once and for all whether Russia could resist the incredible power of the nearly invincible Swedish army that had dominated northeastern Europe in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War. Yet the Swedish Empire was overextended and its population was eclipsed by its rivals. At the start of the 18th century, Sweden had only 1.5 million people whereas Russia had eight million.

Swedish King Charles XII assumed power at the age of 15 in 1697. The rival rulers of Denmark, Poland and Russia all saw advantage to be gained by striking quickly against the young monarch. They forged a triple alliance known as the Northern Union and moved against Swedish possessions in February 1700.


The Swedish army proved no match for the superior numbers of the Russian army

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The members of the alliance soon found that they had sorely misjudged the military shrewdness and audacity of their youthful enemy. Charles vowed revenge against King Frederick IV of Denmark, King Augustus II of Poland-Saxony, and Tsar Peter I of Russia. The young king, who perpetuated the long-standing Swedish tradition of campaigning in person, resolved to defeat Denmark, Poland and Russia in that order.

Charles was averse to dividing his forces, and therefore planned to focus on defeating one enemy at a time. Denmark fell easily enough in the summer of 1700. Charles found himself forced into confronting the Russians unexpectedly when the Polish-Saxon army besieged Riga in Livonia at the same time that the Russians besieged Narva in Estonia. The Swedish warrior king landed 8,000 troops on 1 October at Pernau in Livonia, intent on relieving Riga. When the Polish-Saxon army hastily quit Livonia, Charles decided to relieve the beleaguered Swedish garrison at Narva.

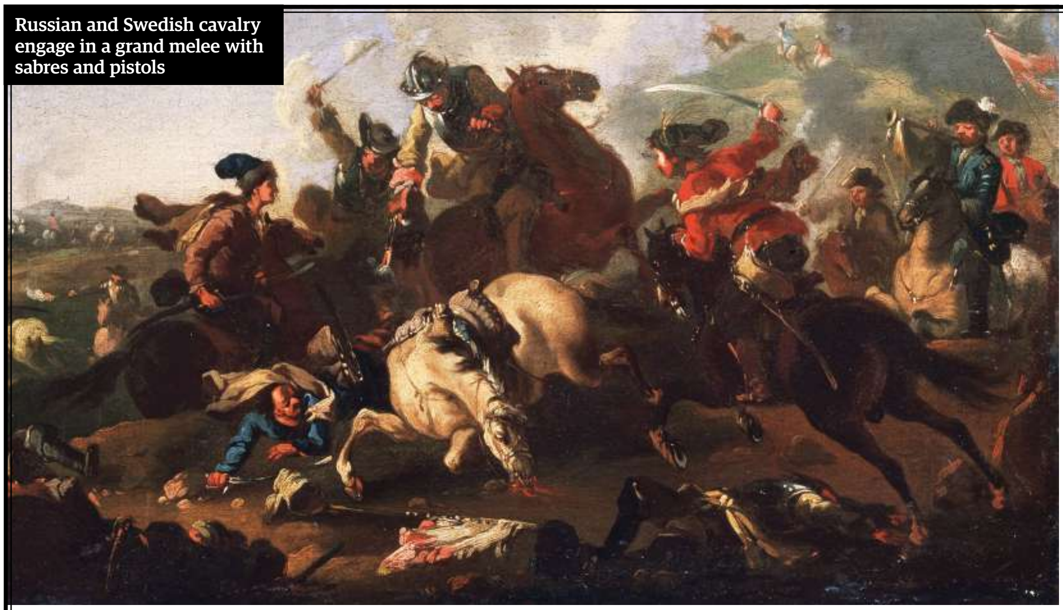
SWEDISH VICTORY AT NARVA

King Charles faced a formidable foe in Tsar Peter I, who was ten years his senior. Standing 2m (6ft 7in) tall, the Russian tsar inspired his troops by his mere presence in battle.

At the outbreak of the war, the poorly trained Russian army was no match for Sweden's veteran forces. Peter, though, already had begun building a new model army along Western European lines. He possessed a core of elite guard units that served as a blueprint for new regiments that he raised, equipped and trained during the conflict. Between the battles of Narva and Poltava, Peter recruited approximately 138,000 soldiers.

In contrast to their Western European counterparts, though, both the Swedish and Russian infantry regiments still had a core of pikemen. Infantry battalions of both armies were composed of one-third pikes and two-thirds muskets. The musketeers of both armies possessed flintlocks and ring bayonets. Charles' Swedish army heavily relied on shock action in the form of the cold steel of their bayonets. While highly effective if the element of surprise was achieved, it was a risky tactic against a prepared enemy that was braced for a bayonet charge.

On 21 November Charles' troops fought their way into the Russian fortified camp at Narva in a driving snowstorm. The Russian army surrendered,



Russian and Swedish cavalry engage in a grand melee with sabres and pistols

and the survivors were allowed to march home. Tsar Peter was in Moscow at the time of the attack. Having freed Livonia and Estonia of enemy forces, Charles turned his attention to defeating Poland over the course of the next five years. He then turned his attention back to Russia.

INVASION OF RUSSIA

Charles invaded Russia in January 1708. The audacious Swedish king's strategy was to seize Moscow and overthrow Peter. As for Tsar Peter, he planned to trade space for time. As the Swedish army turned east, the tsar unleashed legions of Cossacks and Kalmucks to lay waste to the corridor leading to Moscow through which the Swedes advanced.

Charles encamped for four months northwest of Minsk from March to June to resupply his army. When he resumed his march, he defeated a Russian army led by field marshals Boris Sheremetev and Alexander Menshikov on 3 June in the Battle of Holowczyn. This time, though, the Russians disengaged in good order and did not surrender as they had at Narva.

As a remedy for his army's chronic shortage of provisions, Charles ordered General Carl Lewenhaupt, commanding the Swedish army in Livonia, to gather as much gunpowder and as many provisions as possible and rendezvous with him on the west bank of the Dnieper River for the final push to Moscow. Charles waited in vain for Lewenhaupt throughout July, but Lewenhaupt had difficulty marching his lumbering column of 2,000 wagons over hundreds of kilometres of dirt tracks.

Charles grew impatient and turned south in early August towards the Ukraine where he hoped to find ample food for his army. He did not abandon his plan to capture Moscow, but instead delayed it. In a bid to ensure sufficient supplies, the Swedish king forged an alliance with Cossack Hetman Mazeppa, the leader of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, who promised to furnish men, food and gunpowder.

When Charles turned south towards Cossack lands, a 145km gap had opened up between the Swedish main army and Lewenhaupt's army. Peter organised an 8,000-strong flying corps at Moscow and led it east where it intercepted and destroyed Lewenhaupt's lumbering wagon train at Lesnaya on 28-29 September 1708. The Russians destroyed all of the convoy's wagons and artillery. The battle marked the first time the Russians had defeated the Swedish army in a pitched battle.

Afterwards, Peter cracked down on the Zaporozhian Cossacks in an effort to limit their defection to the Swedes. The Russians burned the Zaporozhian capital of Baturin and slaughtered its civilian population on 2 November. The incident cowed the Cossacks and denied the Swedish army an opportunity to replenish its gunpowder.

SWEDISH KING WOUNDED

By spring 1709 the tide of the campaign had switched in favour of the Russians. Charles had become obsessed with defeating Peter's forces, and he rejected the suggestion that he either withdraw temporarily to Poland or await Swedish reinforcements scheduled to arrive in late summer. The Swedish king desperately wanted a pitched battle in which he could reinvigorate his army.

On 1 May Charles' 25,000-man army besieged the commercial town of Poltava overlooking the Vorskla River. The Swedes had only enough troops for a partial siege because they had to keep the bulk of their forces in the field to manoeuvre against Tsar Peter's army. In early June Peter began assembling his 80,000-strong army on the east bank of the Vorskla for the purpose of relieving Poltava.

While reconnoitring south of Poltava, Charles was severely wounded by a musket ball that traversed the length of his foot. Command of the Swedish army devolved to Field Marshal Carl Gustav Rehnskiold. The Swedes crafted a litter slung between two horses for Charles to accompany the army during its advance to battle. Although Rehnskiold was competent, he lacked the Charles' charisma and daring.

On June 19 Tsar Peter led his army across the Vorskla north of Poltava. He ordered his troops to build an elaborate fortified camp protected by high earthen walls just 5.5km north of Poltava.

To prevent a surprise attack by the Swedes, he ordered his troops to construct six redoubts 275m apart in a north-south line and another four redoubts perpendicular to them on the north side. The foot soldiers manning the redoubts would slow the Swedish advance. Most of the redoubts held between 100 to 300 men and one or two guns, but the third redoubt from the south housed 1,000 men.

CLASH AT THE REDOUBTS

The Swedish infantry arrayed in five columns of battalions marched began their attack at 4am on 27 June. Rehnskiold intended that the six battalions in the middle column under General Carl Roos would pin down the Russians in the redoubts while the other four columns – two east of the redoubts under Rehnskiold and two more west of the redoubts under Lewenhaupt – would smash their way through the horizontal line of redoubts and assemble on the 1.5km-wide plain opposite the Russian camp. Rehnskiold intended that both Roos and Lewenhaupt would rejoin him, but he failed to fully inform them beforehand of his plans. King Charles in his litter accompanied Rehnskiold.

Rather than breaking off his attack and marching to rejoin the main Swedish army, Roos continued to launch fresh assaults on the largest of the redoubts. He had not understood the nuance of the Swedish plan in which he would only engage the Russians in the redoubts long enough for the Swedish infantry to reach the Russian camp.

When Lewenhaupt veered to the east, Rehnskiold sent orders instructing him to rejoin the main Swedish army west of the Russian fort. Once the two wings had joined, Rehnskiold had two divisions totalling approximately 5,000 infantry. Roos's division, though, was still bogged down at the redoubts.

Roos lost half of his 2,000 troops in three failed assaults against the third redoubt in a 90-minute period. At 6am he took up a defensive position as Russian reinforcements with artillery arrived in front of him. Russian dragoons encircled his dwindling force and infantry charged his position. Rehnskiold sent a small force to try to extricate Roos's division, but the relief force was unable to reach the isolated Swedish troops.

A bloody fight ensued at the redoubts in which soldiers of both sides fought hand-to-hand with pikes, bayonets and clubbed muskets. When offered the opportunity to surrender at 9am, Roos accepted the offer.

THE RUSSIANS EMERGE

The Swedish commanders believed that if they could fight their way into the Russian camp the enemy's greater numbers would be negated by the tight space in the interior of the fort that would make it impossible to manoeuvre and bring their advantage to bear. The technique had worked at

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Narva, and the Swedes believed they might be able to pull off the same kind of victory again.

Yet having lost a full division of infantry at the redoubts, Rehnskiold had second thoughts about attacking the camp. He was on the verge of breaking off the attack and returning to Poltava when the Russians began emerging from their fort at 8am. Encouraged by the realisation he would not have to attack the Russians in a fortified position, Rehnskiold ordered his troops to wheel into line opposite the Russians.

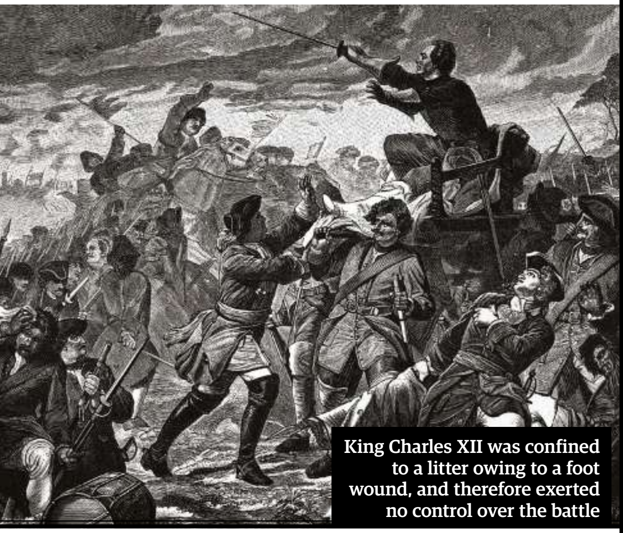
The Russian first rank contained 14,000 men supported by 35 light field guns. The second line, which functioned as a reserve, had 10,000 men. The tsar ordered light field guns positioned between the 24 battalions in the front rank. The Russian cavalry in bright green uniforms deployed on both wings. As for the tsar, he took up a position astride his dun-coloured Arabian horse with the elite Novgorod Regiment on the Russian left.

SWEDISH CHARGE

Upon Lewenhaupt's order, drummers beat the signal for attack. The crack Swedish troops surged forward with fixed bayonets. To protect the infantry against the overlapping ranks of Russian musketeers, the Swedish cavalry moved into position to guard the flanks of the thin Swedish battle line.

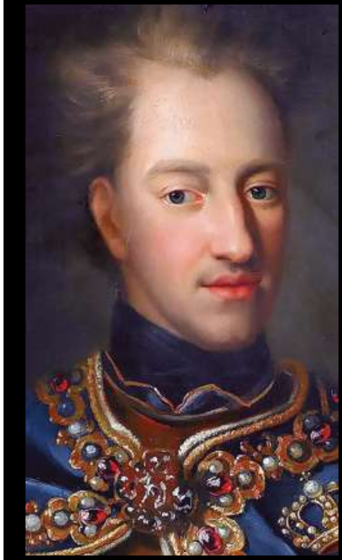
Although suffering from hunger and disease, the 5,000 Swedish foot soldiers rose to the herculean task that confronted them given that they were outnumbered by nearly five to one. Lewenhaupt's best chance of success lay in bringing superior force to bear against one section of the Russian line in order to shatter it. As the Swedes swept forward, Russian cannons in the frontline roared. Heavier guns on the ramparts of the fort fired shells that arced over the Russian foot and landed among the Swedes who had less than a handful of guns with which to reply. The close-range fire tore gaps in the Swedish line carrying away swaths of bluecoats. Despite the hellish cannon and musket fire, the Swedes came on in grand fashion.

The Swedish Guards battalions on the right side of the Swedish line punched their way through the



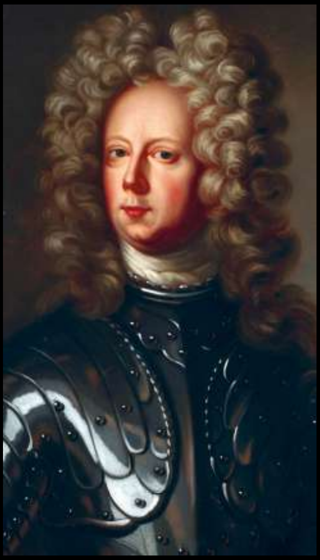
King Charles XII was confined to a litter owing to a foot wound, and therefore exerted no control over the battle

SWEDISH ARMY



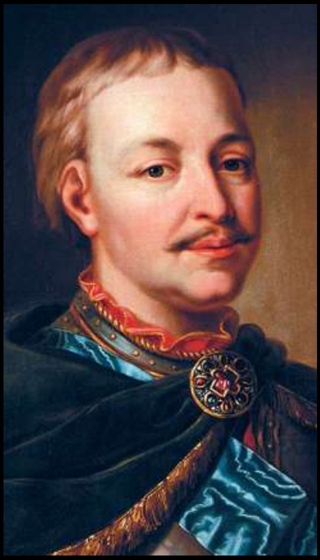
CHARLES XII OF SWEDEN

The king of Sweden had led his nation in a number of battles leading up to this one, but was shot in the foot while observing the Russian position ahead of this battle and was unable to lead the operation. Still, he was the one to give the final order to retreat when it was clear the battle was lost.



CARL GUSTAV REHNSKIÖLD

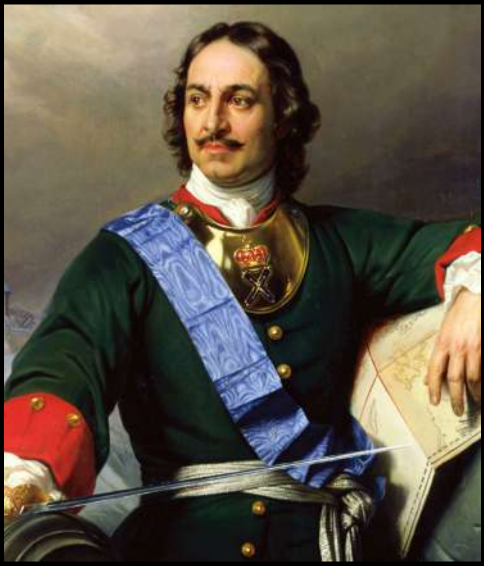
With Charles XII out of action or at least sidelined by his wound, Rehnskiöld was the man tasked with being commander in chief of Sweden's troops at Poltava. However, he ended up being captured by the Russians. He was a prisoner of war in Moscow until 1718, returning to service, but died in 1722.



IVAN MAZEPA

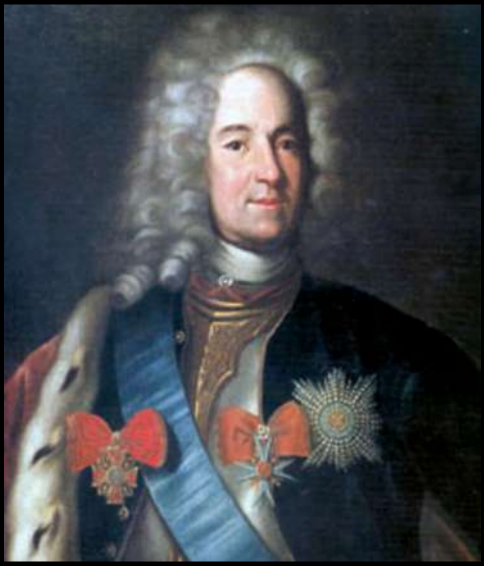
The Prince of the Holy Roman Empire is a significant Ukrainian military, political and literary figure, inspiring many artistic interpretations of his life. At Poltava he defected from the Russian side to aid Charles XII and was effectively excommunicated by the Russian Orthodox Church.

RUSSIAN ARMY



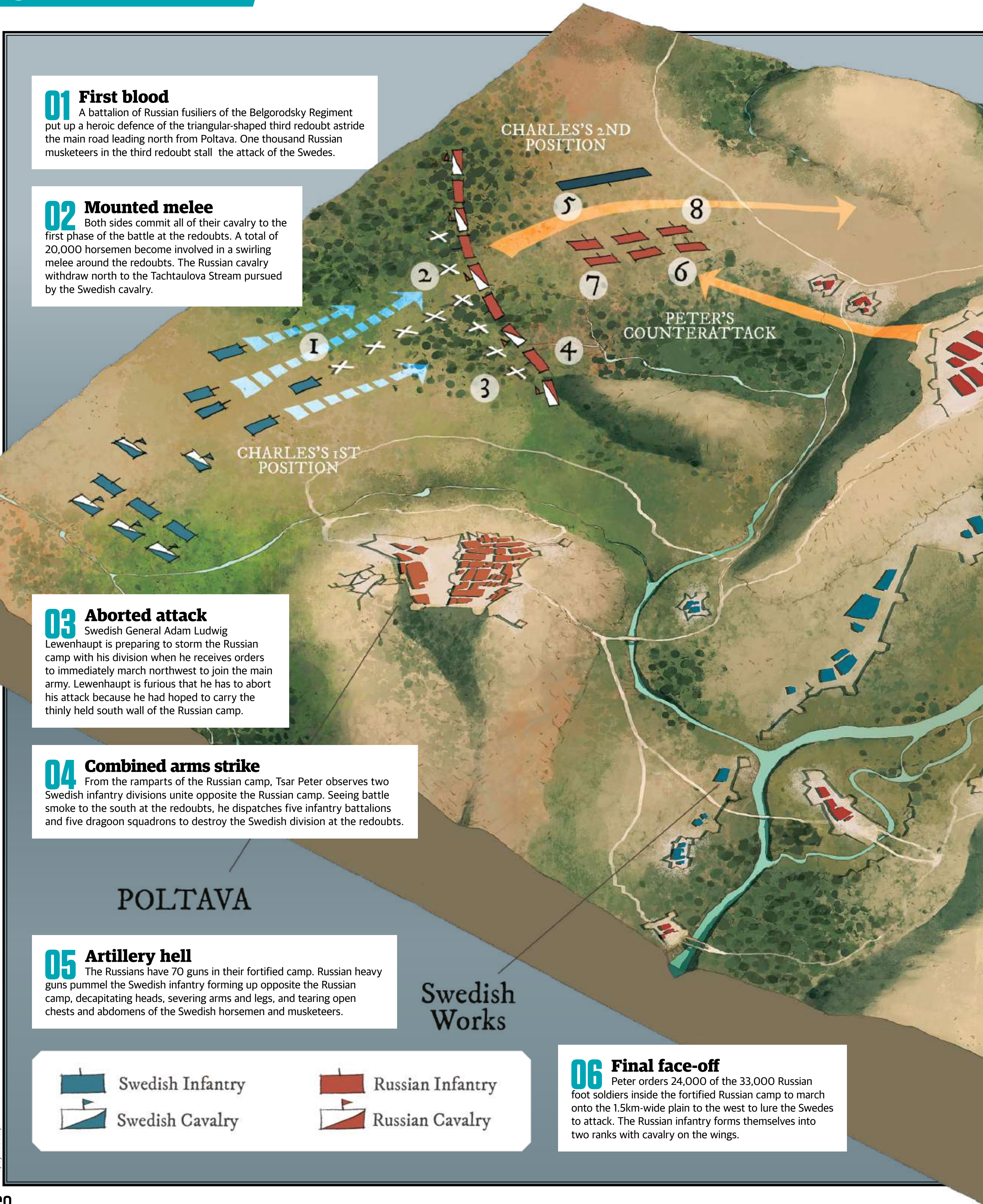
PETER THE GREAT

Peter's victory over the Swedish Army was significant on two important points. First, he had managed to overcome one of the best military opponents in Europe at the time. Second, it undermined the feeling that the Russian army was weak and poorly managed. It was a major step toward Russia becoming an imperial power.



ALEXANDER DANILOVICH MENSHIKOV

Menshikov would leave Poltava as a field marshal having played a key role in flanking and containing Sweden's cavalry, alongside Boris Sheremetev who preceded him as field marshal going into the battle. He would go on to be Generalissimo of the Russian Army and a member of the Supreme Privy Council.



01 First blood

A battalion of Russian fusiliers of the Belgorodsky Regiment put up a heroic defence of the triangular-shaped third redoubt astride the main road leading north from Poltava. One thousand Russian musketeers in the third redoubt stall the attack of the Swedes.

02 Mounted melee

Both sides commit all of their cavalry to the first phase of the battle at the redoubts. A total of 20,000 horsemen become involved in a swirling melee around the redoubts. The Russian cavalry withdraw north to the Tachtaulova Stream pursued by the Swedish cavalry.

03 Aborted attack

Swedish General Adam Ludwig Lewenhaupt is preparing to storm the Russian camp with his division when he receives orders to immediately march northwest to join the main army. Lewenhaupt is furious that he has to abort his attack because he had hoped to carry the thinly held south wall of the Russian camp.

04 Combined arms strike

From the ramparts of the Russian camp, Tsar Peter observes two Swedish infantry divisions unite opposite the Russian camp. Seeing battle smoke to the south at the redoubts, he dispatches five infantry battalions and five dragoon squadrons to destroy the Swedish division at the redoubts.

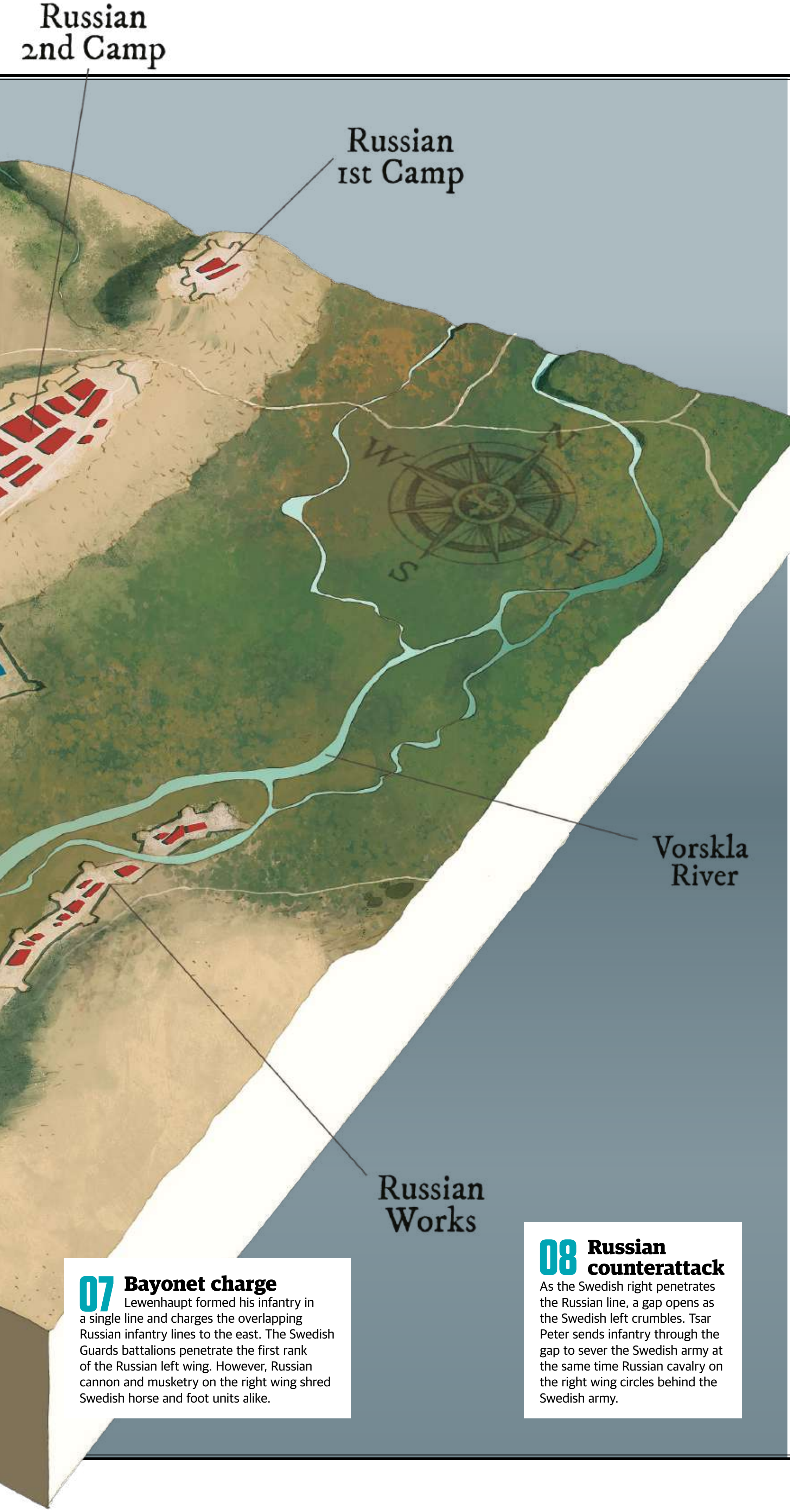
05 Artillery hell

The Russians have 70 guns in their fortified camp. Russian heavy guns pummel the Swedish infantry forming up opposite the Russian camp, decapitating heads, severing arms and legs, and tearing open chests and abdomens of the Swedish horsemen and musketeers.

06 Final face-off

Peter orders 24,000 of the 33,000 Russian foot soldiers inside the fortified Russian camp to march onto the 1.5km-wide plain to the west to lure the Swedes to attack. The Russian infantry forms themselves into two ranks with cavalry on the wings.

Map by: Rocio Espin



07 Bayonet charge
Lewenhaupt formed his infantry in a single line and charges the overlapping Russian infantry lines to the east. The Swedish Guards battalions penetrate the first rank of the Russian left wing. However, Russian cannon and musketry on the right wing shred Swedish horse and foot units alike.

08 Russian counterattack
As the Swedish right penetrates the Russian line, a gap opens as the Swedish left crumbles. Tsar Peter sends infantry through the gap to sever the Swedish army at the same time Russian cavalry on the right wing circles behind the Swedish army.

first rank of Russians and continued on to engage the second rank of green-coated enemy infantry. Yet on the other end of the field, the Russian right pushed back the Swedish left. As a result, a wide gap ripe for exploitation by the Russians developed between the Swedish left and right wings. Peter, who had been shouting encouragement to the troops on the Russian left, ordered the Russian infantry in the centre of the field to exploit the gap.

Lewenhaupt had hoped that Major General Carl Gustav Creutz's cavalry on the Swedish right would be able to exploit the breach in the Russian first rank made by the Swedish foot guards, but Menshikov's unrelenting dragoons checked the advance of their Swedish counterparts. Lewenhaupt watched in horror as the Russian ranks on Peter's right wing overwhelmed the Swedish left. The Russian cannon and musketry shot through the Swedish foot and horse on the north side of the field.

The bulk of the Swedish cavalry could not withstand the hailstorm of iron and lead to assist the infantry. Fifty mounted horsemen of the elite Swedish Life Guards made a suicidal charge in an effort to cover the infantry's retreat. Russian musketeers who sensed victory swarmed around the horsemen stabbing them with their bayonets and dragging them from their saddles. On the other end of the field, Russian dragoons worked their way around the Swedish left flank and wrought havoc in the rear of the Swedish army.

Lewenhaupt rode forward to try to stave off the disaster that unfolded before his eyes. With defeat hanging in the air like a heavy fog, Charles had no choice but to leave the field. Only three members of his escort remained, and they led him south to safety. Rehnskiold was captured in the press, but Lewenhaupt escaped.

FINAL SURRENDER

The butcher's bill was heavy for the Swedes. They lost 7,000 killed and wounded and 3,000 captured. As for the Russians, they suffered 4,500 casualties. After the battle, Charles called from their various outposts and missions his screening forces and his siege forces.

Charles still had 15,000 Swedish troops and 6,000 Cossacks. Abandoning Poltava, the Swedish army marched 19km south. With Rehnskiold captured, Lewenhaupt took command of the army. Charles escaped south to Ottoman lands. Owing to the poor condition of the Swedish army and the encirclement by Russian forces, Lewenhaupt surrendered on 30 June.

The Battle of Poltava was a decisive Russian victory and a major turning point in the war. It marked the advent of Russia on the European stage as a major power. Through the Treaty of Nystad in 1721 Russia gained Estonia and Livonia from Sweden. Peter took the title of emperor, Russia became the dominant power in Eastern Europe and the Baltic Sea eventually became a 'Russian Lake'. In the aftermath of the Great Northern War, Sweden was relegated to being a second-rate military power.

What If...

ROMMEL HAD WON IN NORTH AFRICA?

The Nazi commander failed to hold off the Allies, but could an Axis victory have changed the course of World War II?

Interview by Callum McKelvie

INTERVIEW WITH

© Ken Delve

KEN DELVE

Ken Delve is a military historian and former RAF navigator. He is the author of *Disaster in the Desert*, which explores what could have happened if Rommel had won in North Africa and swept into Egypt.

In 1941, Erwin Rommel (who came to be known as the 'Desert Fox') had been given control of Germany's North Africa Korps. In a short period of time he had managed to achieve a staggering number of victories against the Allies. Despite this, the North African front appeared to be of secondary importance to the German high command compared to the brutal battles occurring on the Eastern Front. A critical supply issue would result in a number of back-and-forth battles and would eventually prove to be Rommel's undoing. However, historian Ken Delve argues that had Rommel achieved victory, and swept into the Middle East, then WWII could have turned out very differently...

What was the situation in North Africa in 1942?

In 1940 there had been the failure of the Allied Crusader Offensive. They entered the north in November 1941 and, despite starting with great promise, by spring 1942 everything had gone badly wrong and had developed into a back-and-forth, which was symptomatic of the desert war. If during an offensive you out-reached your supply lines you were under threat because the enemy is then able to get enough supplies [of their own]. The enemy then goes on the offensive and you have to roll back hundreds of miles. Rommel's offensive started very well and was able to hold the line and resupply, forcing the Allies back into Egypt. By summer 1942 there was a distinct threat that the Germans and Italians would take Egypt.

How close at this point was Rommel to victory?

It's an interesting one, because you never quite know if the Allied commanders were as bad as some people make them out to be. There were some phenomenally good Allied ground troops. The vast majority of squadrons deployed in the war [in North Africa] were not actually British troops but were colonial groups. And although Rommel did look quite close he was so over-stretched that the chances of him actually succeeding in getting through to take Cairo and the Suez Canal were pretty slim because of the integration of his supply lines.

Ultimately, what caused Rommel's defeat in North Africa?

What really caused the defeat of Rommel was a lack of supply, because he was relying on bringing everything across the Mediterranean. If you could interrupt those supply lines, he would have no tanks, no men and no fuel. So the failure to bring supplies, especially fuel, was really the death knell of Rommel's campaign and that was largely down to air [power]. 39th Squadron played a large part in that, and was known as the 'Ship Busters'. Rommel needed to neutralise this from North Africa, but especially from Malta, and the key failure was

© Alamy

RIGHT
German armoured forces in the desert of North Africa

Main image source: © Alamy, © Getty Images

THE PAST

1891

BECOMING THE DESERT FOX

Erwin Rommel was born on 15 November 1891. He joined the military in 1910 and fought in WWI. When WWII began he was placed in charge of the troops who protected Hitler. In February 1940, Rommel took command of the 7th Armoured Panzer Division and proved his abilities with a victory on France's Channel Coast. He was nicknamed the Desert Fox after his initial successes commanding the Africa Korps in the North African desert.

MAY – JUNE 1941

THE BATTLE OF CRETE

Germany mounted an ambitious airborne and amphibious assault on the strategically vital island. The operation was a disaster for the British but also resulted in over 3,000 German fatalities. Despite the Nazis' success on Crete the casualty rate may have resulted in Hitler's reluctance to press ahead with an invasion of Malta.

OCTOBER 1944

THE DEATH OF ROMMEL

Following defeat in North Africa, Rommel was moved to Northern France in order to defend against a possible Allied invasion. Here the commander began to lose faith in both Hitler and the direction of the war, and he doubted Germany's chances of victory. Rommel was approached by a group of conspirators who discussed the possibility of a new German government, led by him. However, the conspirators failed to reveal to him that they planned to remove Hitler from power through assassination. When Hitler discovered Rommel's links to the failed 1944 July Plot to kill him Rommel was offered a choice: trial or suicide. He chose the latter and took cyanide capsules.

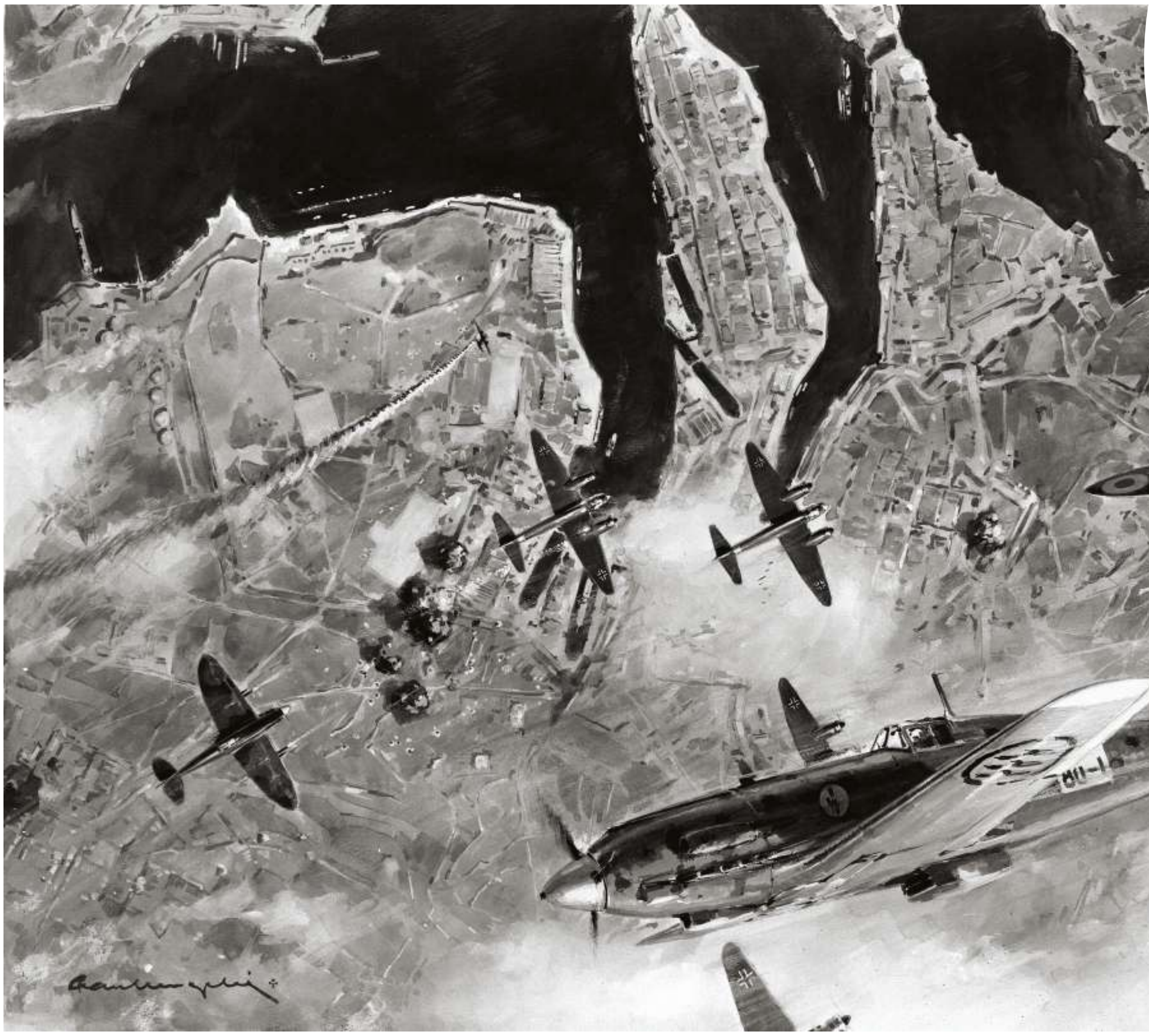
Rommel not neutralising Malta. From the Allies' point of view, when a new tanker was sailing every effort was made to sink it and as a result every single oil tanker was sunk.

How close was a possible Axis victory in North Africa?

Primarily they would have to have taken Malta. If Malta had fallen then it would have been easier for the Axis forces to move their fuel, their munitions and everything else across. The Italians often got a bad press, but they worked really hard at supplying ships and personnel to try to drive the supplies across. It's just that the Allies were very good at disrupting them. There were plans in place for an assault on Malta, but for whatever reason the decision was taken by the Axis forces not to push forward. It is possible that the costly invasion of Crete [in May 1941] had had an impact. Also, the Axis forces were having to move air power from theatre to theatre. So when the Axis powers made an impact in North Africa they achieved this by taking air power out of Russia and removing it when it was needed for the Eastern Front. In terms of air power, the Axis from 1940 onwards was robbing Peter to pay Paul.

If Operation Torch (the Anglo-US invasion of northwest Africa) had failed, what would've been the impact?

It's an interesting one. When you look at alternate history, you say: "Yes, it would have an impact because you've now got the Germans having to fight on two fronts." They did remarkably well for a while but [Bernard] Montgomery's offensive in El Alamein pushed Rommel back far enough to be able to counter the attack in North Africa. Montgomery was an incredibly slow mover and incredibly cautious, which allowed Rommel to play with two fronts for a while. However, there is an argument that says the Allies would probably still have won anyway. That's because all of the airfields captured on the North African side where Operation Torch was involved didn't make a lot of difference anyway. However, because of Torch the Germans moved a lot of different forces into North Africa. The main impact of Torch was



TOP
A German soldier surrenders during the Battle of El Alamein

ABOVE-INSET
Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery, who led the Allies to victory in North Africa

LEFT
German bombers attack the port of Valletta, Malta. The island was used by the Allies to launch attacks against Nazi supply ships

that it was a blooding for the Americans and a blooding for the combined command structure. A lot of the failings of politics, personalities and tactics were hammered out in North Africa and made the D-Day assault more effective. When you look at the command structure for D-Day, it was the command structure from North Africa. So the likes of Dwight D Eisenhower, Montgomery, they all moved across having learned lessons in North Africa.

What would have been the immediate aftermath of a victory in North Africa for Rommel?
If Rommel had taken Malta and received the supplies he needed and driven into Egypt, Torch would not have happened. If the Suez Canal had fallen, Rommel could have swung up through the oil fields in Iraq and essentially the Allies would've lost their major source of oil. Of course, this would've meant the Germans getting a bigger supply of oil. If the Germans had taken those Iraqi oil fields, they could've moved into Iran and into the soft underbelly of Russia where they could've join up with Axis forces and provided them with oil as well. One of the primary downfalls of the German forces was lack of oil. Germany did an amazingly good job with creating synthetic oil products but it's not the same. The intensity of attacks on oil targets in Europe were such that their production rates were minimal. If they had been able to capture oil facilities in the Middle East, and then in the Russian areas as well, for example Romania, it would have made a huge difference. The Allied collapse in North Africa would have led to the collapse of the whole of that area. The Allies would not have been able to hold that area.

Could that then have altered the course of the war?
Definitely. Oil is such an important aspect of it because the Axis forces could have then joined their Middle East forces with their forces in Russia and that could have seen the Russians collapse. With North Africa having been lost the Allies would have found it very hard to get it back. If they'd lost Egypt and the Suez Canal the question is would the Allies still have gone ahead with an attack in North Africa to try to divide the Axis forces? Would they have tried to assault Egypt from basically their bases in India and Africa? The loss of the Middle East would have been a massive loss of British prestige. Winston Churchill pointed out that one reason the Allies fought pretty hard not to lose the Middle East was because if certain countries saw we were not able to protect it, those countries could've possibly changed sides or not supported the Allies.

Is it fair to suggest that if Rommel had won in North Africa, the Germans could have won WWII?
I think so. I mean, you have to talk about how strategic bombing played a part. And remember – the Allies having won in North Africa as well as the invasion of Italy meant they could now attack southern Germany and Austria from air bases around Bosnia and Italy. Their strategic bombing campaign was now increased against Germany itself. If the Axis had held all of that, the Italians would not have left the Axis side and integral strategic bombing would have been minimised. We may have even seen the Americans say: "That's all too little too late and let's not brother." That's why I think Churchill was right to dig in his heels with the Americans. The Americans did not want a Mediterranean campaign. They wanted the Allies to focus all their attention on going into Europe, but that was wrong. So I think the Allies eventually winning in the Middle East was crucial to the Allies winning the war, and therefore the converse is also true.

THE POSSIBILITY

1941

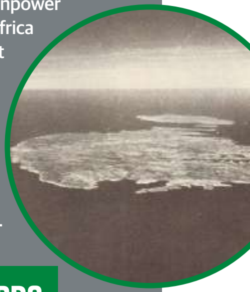
THE IMPORTANCE OF OIL

Rashid Gaylani took control of the kingdom of Iraq in 1941 with assistance from both Germany and Italy. Due to Allied concerns that the country's crucial oil fields might be about to fall into the hands of the Axis powers, Britain waged a 30-day war and toppled his regime. This nonetheless highlighted the importance of oil. Had Rommel been able to push into Iraq and seize its oil fields, the outcome of WWII may have been very different.

1942

OPERATION HERKULES

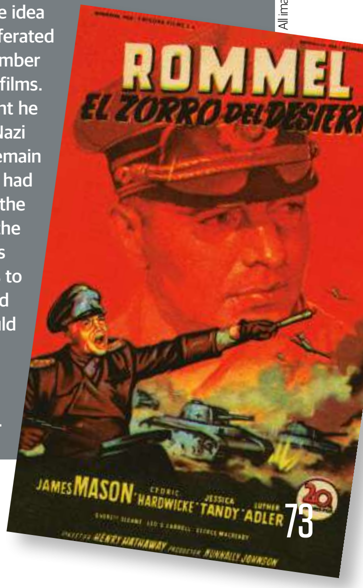
Herkules was a planned operation for the capture of the islands of Malta and Gozo to secure Axis supply lines to North Africa. But Nazi casualties sustained during the Battle of Crete led Hitler to cancel this plan in November 1942. The manpower was instead sent to North Africa to assist Rommel's forces at his request. However, had the islands been captured it is possible that Rommel may have had the supplies necessary to defeat the Allies in North Africa and change the course of the war.



1945 ONWARDS

ROMMEL MYTH

The Rommel Myth is the idea that he was a noble leader and military genius who was uncommitted to Nazi ideology. The idea has been proliferated through a number of books and films. To what extent he believed in Nazi ideology will remain unknown, but had the course of the war differed the question has to be raised as to whether Allied politicians would have viewed him as the supposedly 'good German'.



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

Through History

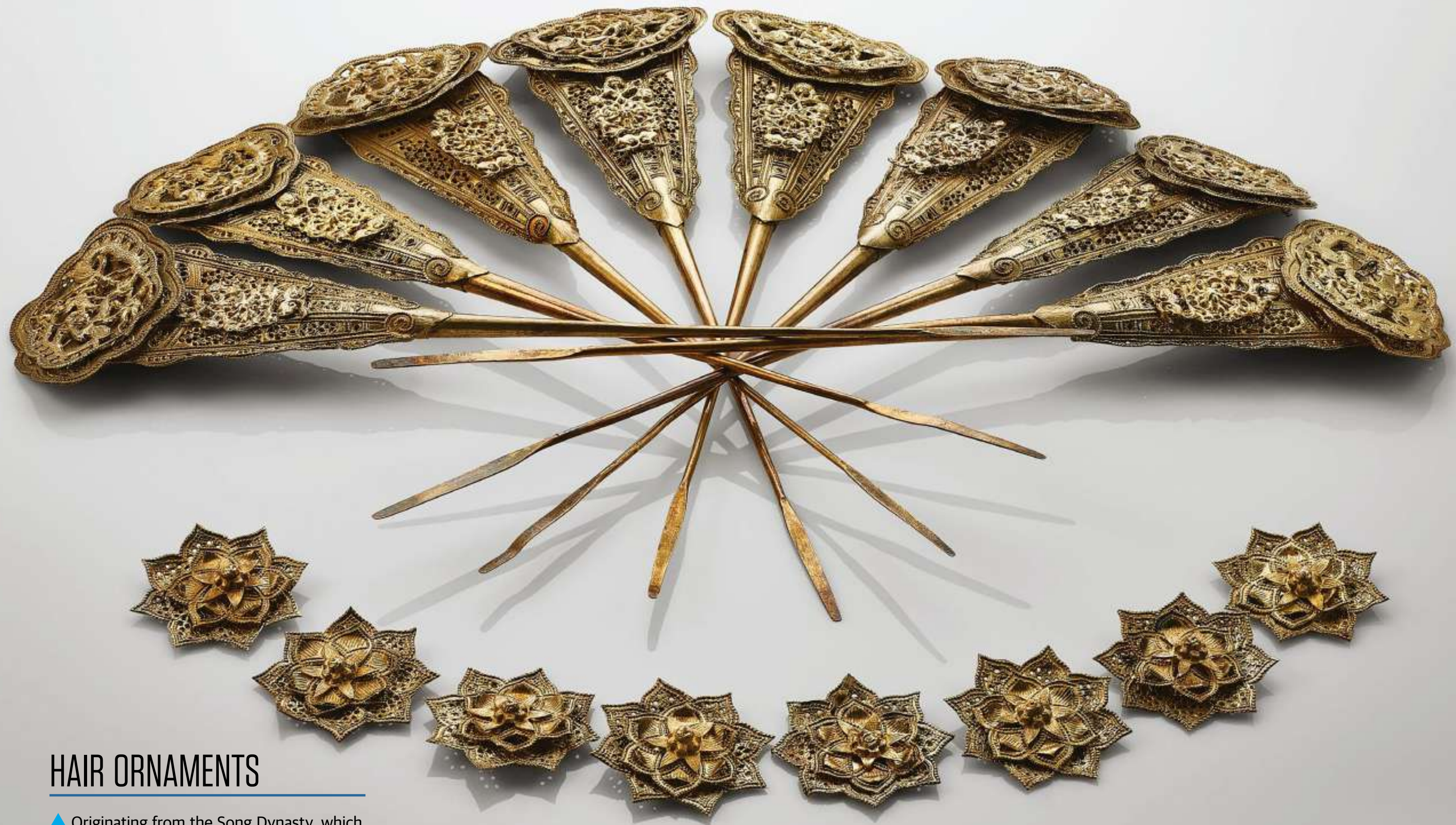
ALL THAT GLITTERS

A new exhibition showcases exquisite gold ornaments from Chinese history

All images: Courtesy of Mengdiexuan Collection, Photo Picspark Co

A Taoist text dating from the Han Dynasty (c.206 BCE to c.220 CE) declares: “Gold is the most valuable thing in all the world because it is immortal and never gets rotten. Alchemists eat it, and they enjoy longevity.” And there’s no doubting the importance of gold in historic China – as a precious metal used in Chinese craftsmanship for millennia it has been the basis for some of the country’s most impressive ornaments and artefacts. Now, a selection of magnificent gold pieces from the private Mengdiexuan Collection is being put on public display in Europe for the very first time.

Gold and Treasures: 3000 years of Chinese Ornaments is a new exhibition at L’ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts in Paris. The exhibition aims to showcase Chinese goldsmithing from throughout the country’s rich and lengthy history, with objects ranging from the time of the Shang Dynasty (c.1500 BCE – c.1046 BCE) to the Qing Dynasty (1644 – 1911). Split into sections that cover the properties of gold, craftsmanship and the power of symbols in art, the exhibition will allow visitors to journey through the history of Chinese goldwork and discover more about Chinese art and its incredible workmanship. With a host of beautiful pieces on display, the exhibition is open now until 14 April 2023.

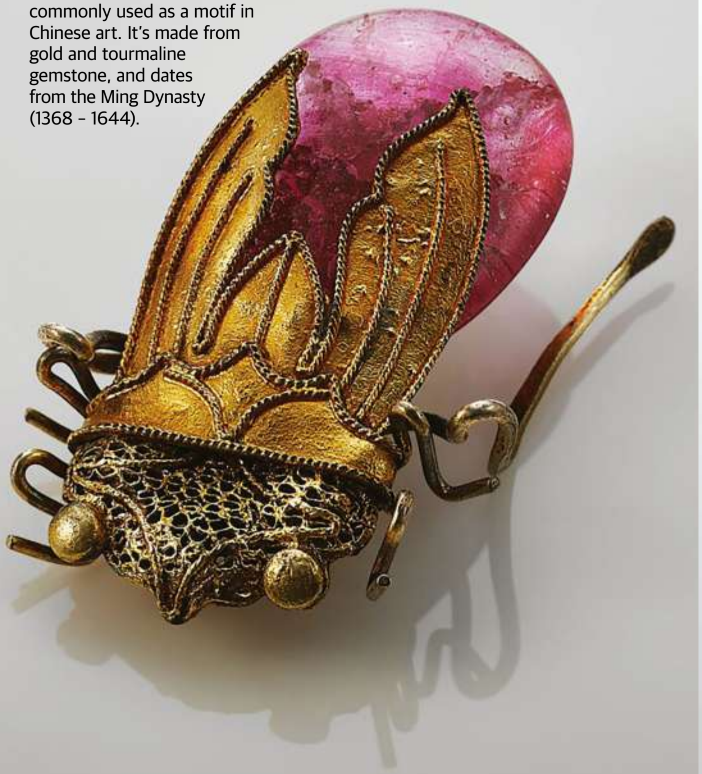


HAIR ORNAMENTS

▲ Originating from the Song Dynasty, which dated from 960 to 1279, these pieces make up a set of hair ornaments. They're made from silver and are gilded with gold, and the design features a motif of dragons.

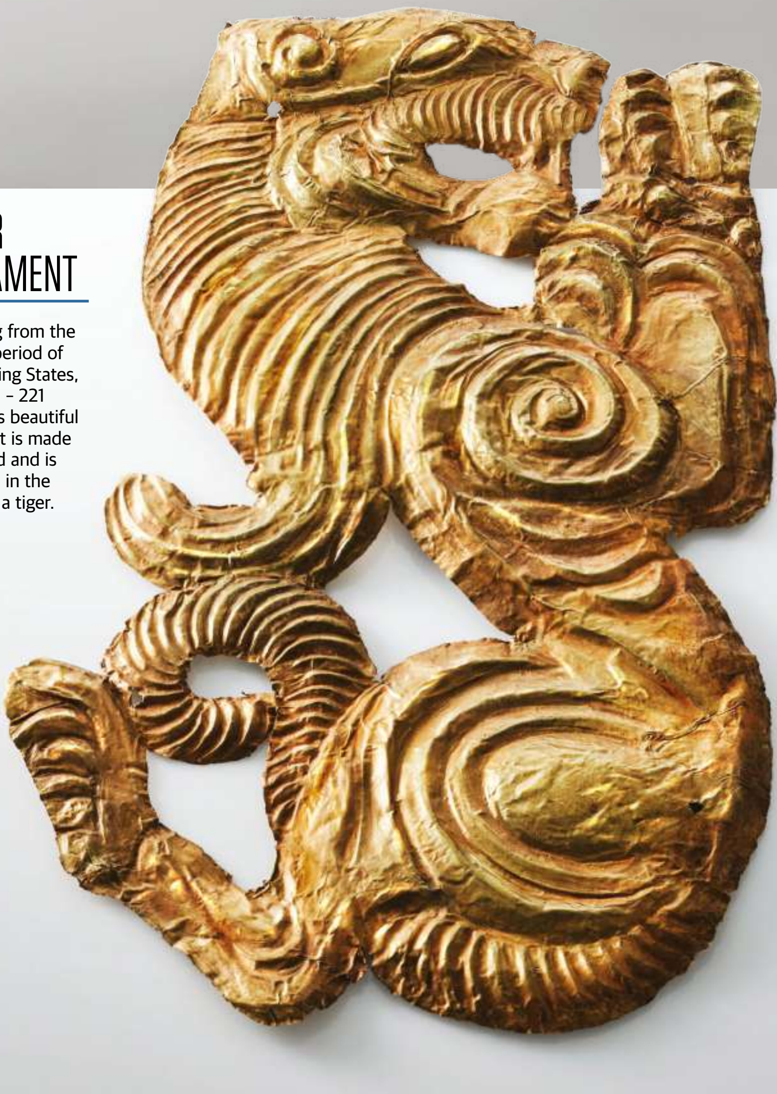
CICADA ORNAMENT

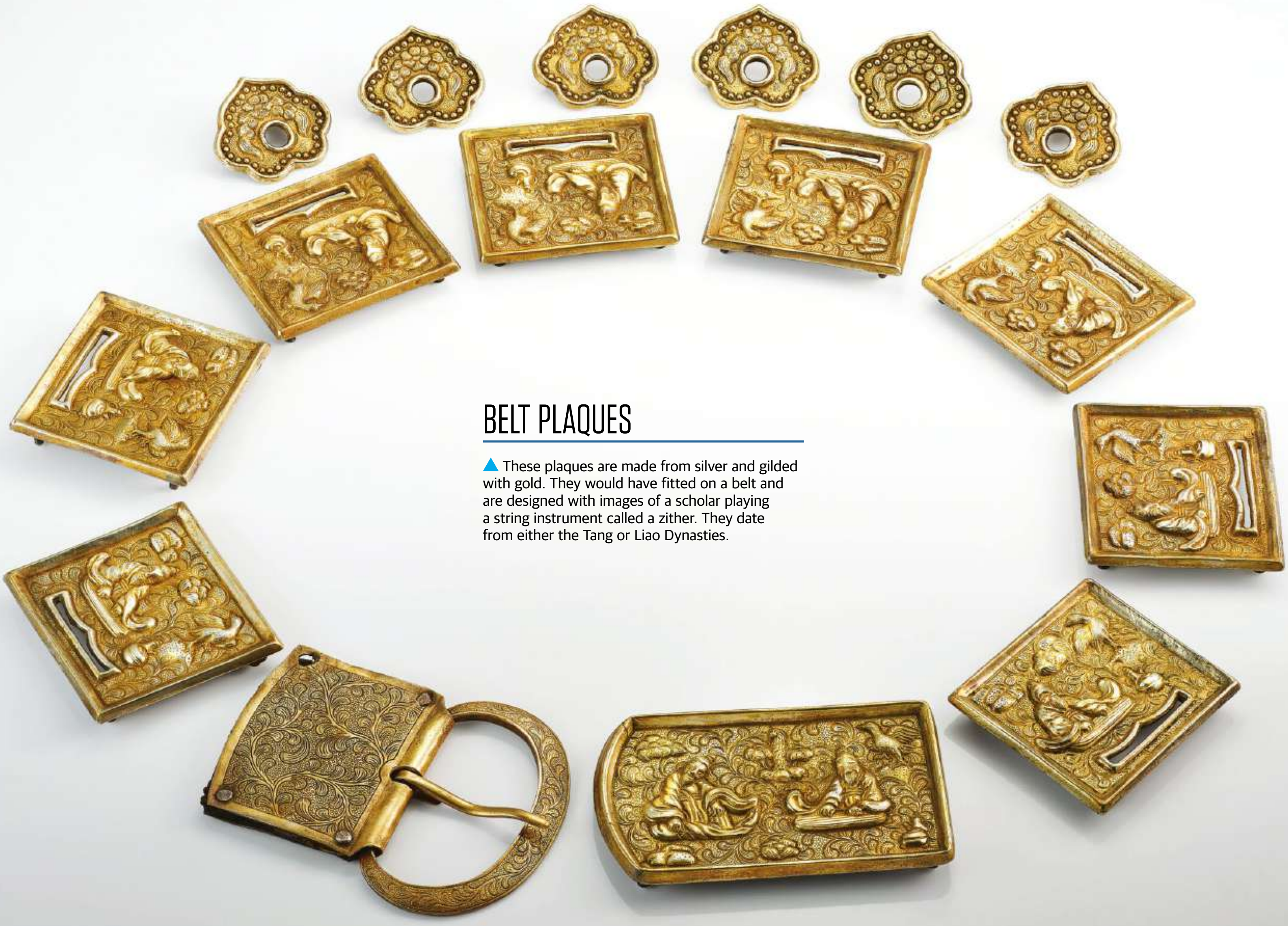
▼ This little ornament is made in the shape of a cicada, an insect commonly used as a motif in Chinese art. It's made from gold and tourmaline gemstone, and dates from the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644).



TIGER ORNAMENT

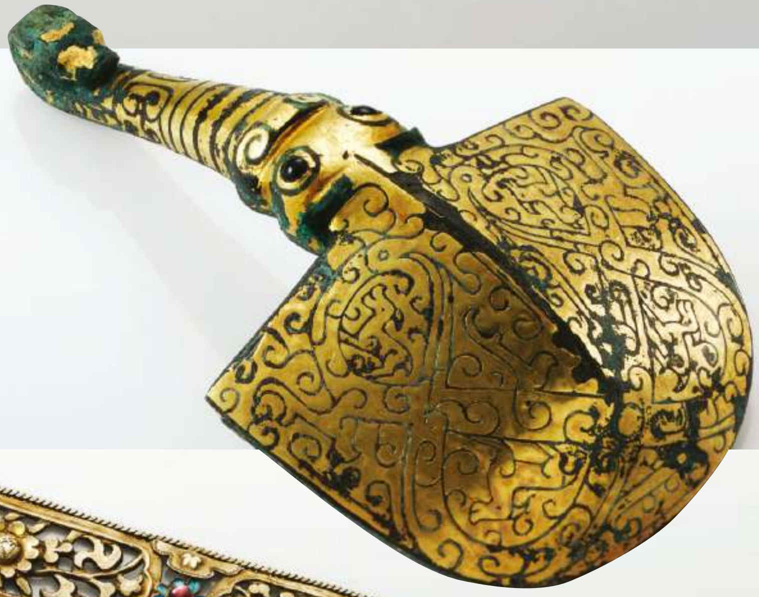
▶ Dating from the ancient period of the Warring States, (475 BCE – 221 BCE), this beautiful ornament is made from gold and is designed in the shape of a tiger.





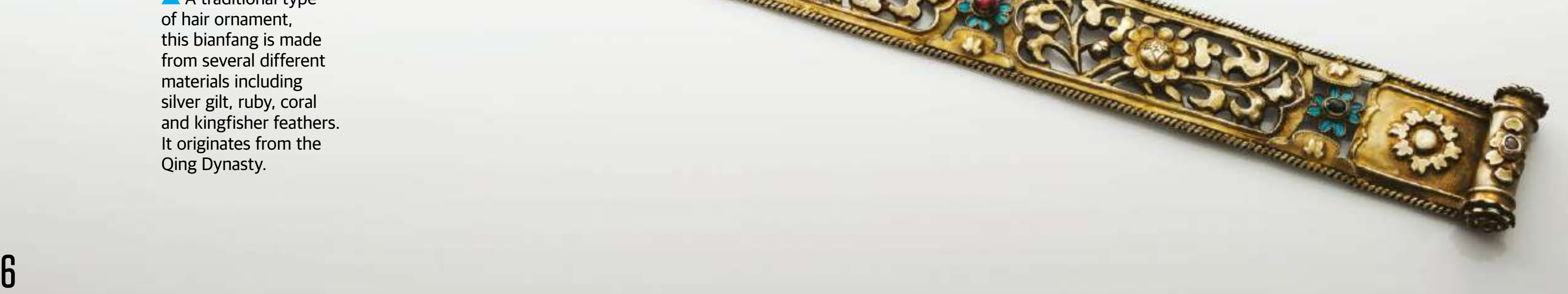
BELT PLAQUES

▲ These plaques are made from silver and gilded with gold. They would have fitted on a belt and are designed with images of a scholar playing a string instrument called a zither. They date from either the Tang or Liao Dynasties.



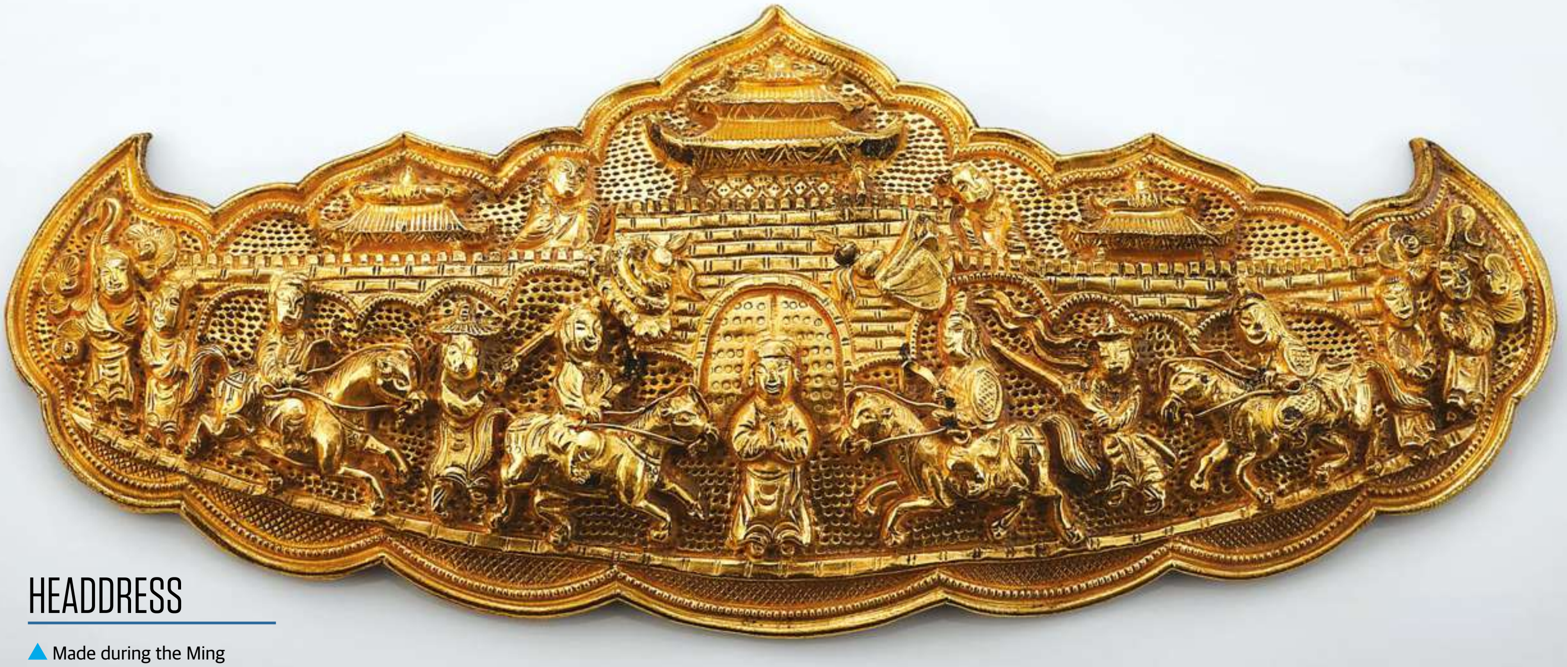
BELT BUCKLE

▶ Dating from between 206 BCE and 8 BCE, this belt buckle comes from the time of the Western Han Dynasty. Made from bronze and decorated with gold leaf, its design shows some kind of mythological creature.



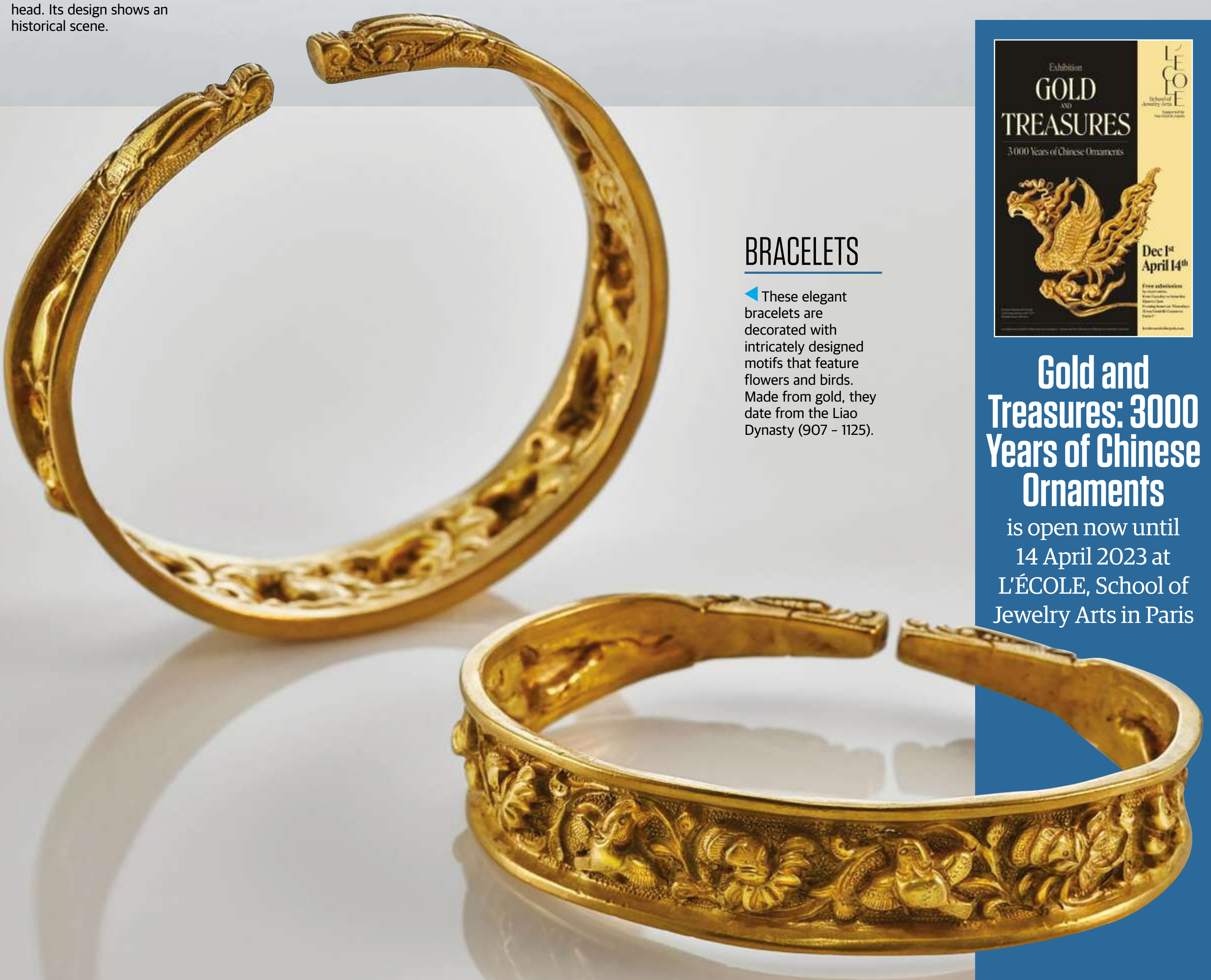
BIANFANG

▲ A traditional type of hair ornament, this bianfang is made from several different materials including silver gilt, ruby, coral and kingfisher feathers. It originates from the Qing Dynasty.



HEADDRESS

▲ Made during the Ming Dynasty, this impressive piece of gold was used as a manguan, a type of headdress that would adorn the back of a woman's head. Its design shows an historical scene.



BRACELETS

◀ These elegant bracelets are decorated with intricately designed motifs that feature flowers and birds. Made from gold, they date from the Liao Dynasty (907 – 1125).

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3 000 Years of Chinese Ornaments

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REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

MY POLICEMAN
BASED ON THE BOOK BY BETHAN ROBERTS
IN SELECT THEATERS OCT 21
NOV 4 | prime video

2x © Alamy

MY POLICEMAN

This tale of queer romance in the 1950s is let down by a weak script

Certificate: 15 **Director:** Michael Grandage **Cast:** Harry Styles, David Dawson, Emma Corrin **Released:** Out now

Based on the 2012 novel of the same name, *My Policeman* tells the story of a love triangle in 1950s Brighton. However, in this tale the object of affection Tom (Harry Styles) has been having an affair with another man. This allows the filmmakers to explore what life was like for gay men when the law victimised them and they could face a jail sentence simply for being in love. The film intercuts these flashbacks with sequences of the characters many decades later, dealing with the fallout of this doomed romance.

One of the main reasons *My Policeman* garnered such attention prior to its release was of course the casting of pop star Styles in the role of the titular policeman. While his acting credentials remain somewhat unproven, he fares okay here – mostly due to the fact that he has little to do – although his accent fluctuates and he seems uncomfortable and unsure of himself throughout the entire film.

Styles is of course the prize for which Marion (Emma Corrin) and Patrick (David Dawson) are competing and it is the latter who is the real highlight. Dawson has the ability to shine in whatever part he is cast, memorably portraying *Coronation Street* creator Tony Warren in the 2010's *The Road to Coronation Street*. Here he imbues Patrick Hazelwood with his immense sympathy and charm. Dawson almost single-handedly keeps the film afloat and manages to sell the pain felt by gay men during the 1950s, even if the screenplay by *Philadelphia* writer Ron Nyswaner drops the ball.

Which brings us to *My Policeman*'s depiction of homosexuality. Telling the story primarily from the perspective of the heterosexual member of the triangle Marion (Gina Mckee plays the older incarnation of the character), feels disingenuous and prioritises her pain above anyone else's. This wouldn't necessarily be a problem except the final revelation about how far she went to keep Tom makes this decision feel awkward. Clearly we are meant to sympathise with her but instead this element comes across as queasy and uncomfortable.

On top of this there is a wholly unnecessary and gratuitous sequence of a homophobic attack that adds little and seems like a sloppy attempt by director Michael Grandage to try and make his viewers feel something, anything. Additionally, *My Policeman* obviously wants to be trailblazing with its portrayal of homosexual sex and while these scenes are certainly explicit, anyone who has dipped their toes into queer cinema will inform you that they are hardly groundbreaking.

Narrative issues plague *My Policeman*. A confusing script befuddles the viewer and is not helped by Grandage's direction. Characters go to locations without introducing them and it is unclear whether revelations made to the audience were already known to the protagonists. The dialogue is clunky and the film plods along with no real sense of purpose.

A sadly pedestrian look at homosexuality in Britain of the late 1950s. ***CM***

★☆☆☆☆

Reviews by
Callum McKelvie, Jonathan Gordon, Emily Staniforth

NEED TO KNOW

An engaging look at the birth of US Intelligence in WWII

Author: Nicholas Reynolds **Publisher:** Mariner Books **Price:** £22 **Released:** Out now

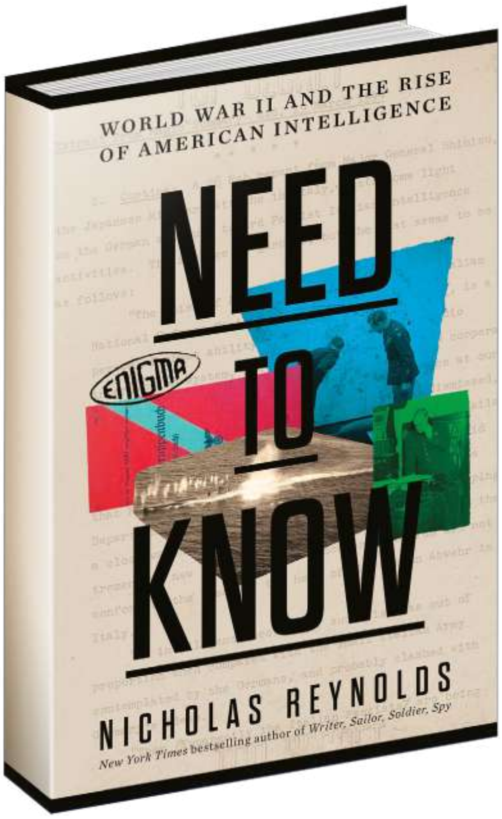
Nicholas Reynolds' *Need To Know* is described on the dust jacket as the "definitive history of American Intelligence during World War II" and it's a statement that's hard to argue with. Reynolds himself certainly seems well-qualified to write such a tome, having worked for the CIA, including a period at the intelligence service's museum. Reynolds isn't new to writing about spy history either, having authored *Writer, Sailor, Soldier, Spy*, which investigated Ernest Hemingway's work as an intelligence operative for both the US and the Soviet Union.

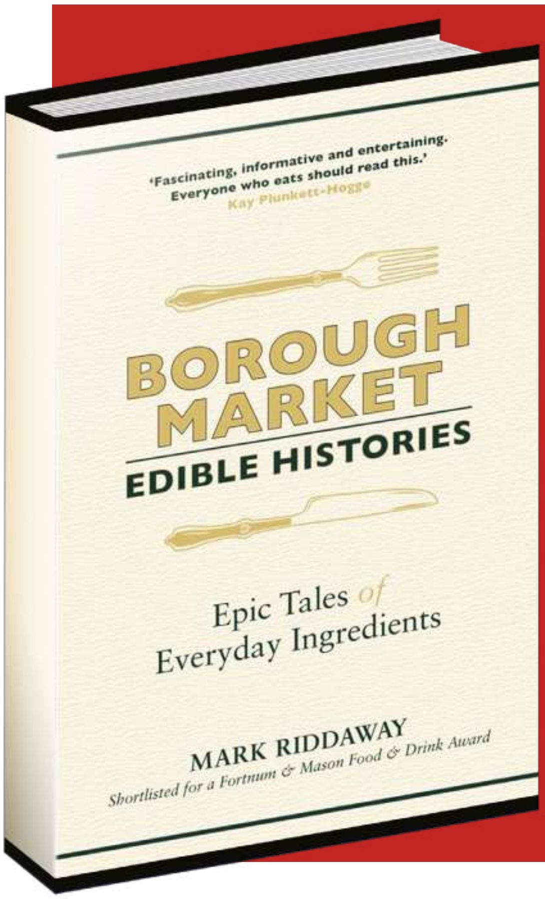
Unusually, Reynolds opens the book with a list of principal characters following a quote from John le Carré. This feels like a pretty good hint towards Reynolds' intent. He writes with vibrancy and pace, almost with the feel of a classic espionage thriller full of interesting real-life characters. This writing style makes even more sense when Commander Ian Fleming pops up during the course of the book.

But Reynolds never forgets that this is a historical work and is certainly exhaustive when it comes to his numerous sources. Indeed, a large part of the back section of the book comprises a lengthy section of notes, principal primary sources and a bibliography alongside the usual acknowledgements, index and a useful list of abbreviations. The notes alone take up nearly 100 pages and are extremely thorough in their detail.

All in all *Need To Know* is a fascinating look at both the birth and role of American Intelligence during World War II. Written with style and verve, this book comes highly recommended to lovers of espionage history. ***CM***

★★★★☆


WORLD WAR II AND THE RISE OF AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE
NEED TO KNOW
ENIGMA
NICHOLAS REYNOLDS
New York Times bestselling author of Writer, Sailor, Soldier, Spy


'Fascinating, informative and entertaining. Everyone who eats should read this.'
Kay Plunkett-Hogge
BOROUGH MARKET
EDIBLE HISTORIES
Epic Tales of Everyday Ingredients
MARK RIDDAWAY
Shortlisted for a Fortnum & Mason Food & Drink Award

BOROUGH MARKET: EDIBLE HISTORIES

A quick historical guide to some kitchen staples

Author: Mark Riddaway **Publisher:** Viking **Price:** £10.99 **Released:** Out now

With a mission to reconnect the food we eat with where it came from, Mark Riddaway offers this nicely curated journey through the history of some of our favourite foods. The inspiration for these explorations is Borough Market in London, where Riddaway is editor of the market's magazine, *Market Life*. While the book gets its title from this connection, it is not actually a history of the market. Instead what we have is a presentation of essays exploring the history of items you might spot as you walked around the famous market's stalls.

What readers get is often surprisingly comprehensive deep-dives into the development of certain food items. We start with the humble apple and an examination of its biblical and philosophical roots, and also the history of its cultivation. Riddaway delves into the origins of coffee as a relatively modern commodity, and tea as one of the oldest. You can also discover why people were originally so sceptical about tomatoes and why vinegar was a 'party crasher' that people gradually came to appreciate.

Riddaway has a light touch and a turn of phrase that feels rather appropriate for a book inspired by market traders. That being said, he doesn't shy away from the darker side of food either, such as the exploitation of workers and the history of slavery. Overall, *Borough Market* offers a varied, entertaining and enlightening guide that should whet your appetite for more food history. ***JG***

★★★★☆

HISTORY OF WAR RECOMMENDS...

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MAX HASTINGS
ABYSS
THE CUBAN M
CRISIS 19
Out now!

Abyss

Author Max Hastings **Price** £30 **Publisher** William Collins

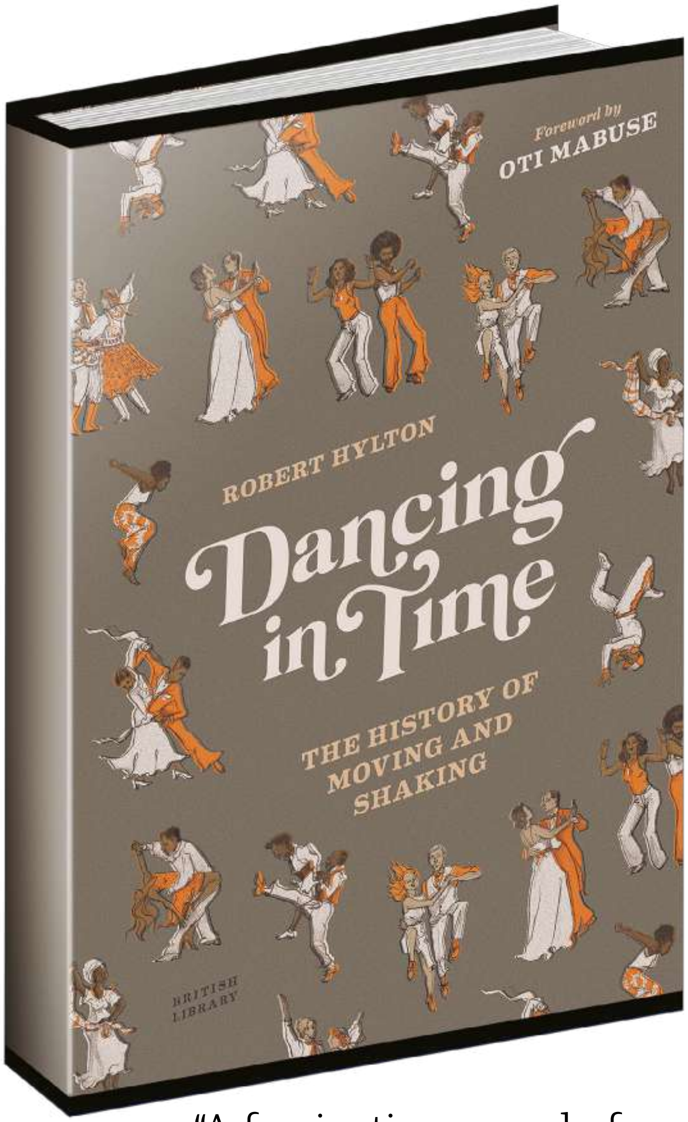
As veteran war correspondent and author Max Hastings points out, the West Berlin crisis, North Korean invasion of the South and the Hungarian Uprising, taken as threats to global devastation, rank as small beer compared with the 13 days of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Hastings tracks the revolution in Cuba, the debates in Washington and Moscow around what could happen next and how some in both capitals were eager to see conflict break out.

DANCING IN TIME

THE HISTORY OF MOVING AND SHAKING

An engaging and entertaining look at the history of dance through the ages

Author: Robert Hylton **Publisher:** The British Library **Price:** £25 **Released:** Out now



“A fascinating record of social history through the prism of dance”

“Dance encourages us to embrace other cultures, but it can also be an empowering way to connect with our own roots.” These words written by the professional dancer and star of BBC’s *Strictly Come Dancing* Oti Mabuse in the foreword encompass the spirit of this well-researched and engaging book published by the British Library. Written by choreographer Robert Hylton, *Dancing In Time* follows the evolution of dance from the minuet at the court of Louis XIV of France, through to the birth of rock‘n’roll in the 1950s and more recently the viral dance trends facilitated by social media platforms such as TikTok.

Hylton draws on his own experience as a dancer and what dance means to him to engage the reader and highlight the personal dimension of dancing that makes it special in its own way to each individual. This emphasis on people and dance as “any shape or form [as] a story of human expression and shared experience” is central to the history Hylton has written. By examining the history of dance as a human phenomenon, the evolution of the physical art feels more intimate and powerful than just the putting together of steps to create a performance piece.

Each chapter of *Dancing In Time* analyses a different type of dance and explores the evolution of that style across time and place. Chapters such as *The Tango* and *The Charleston* focus solely on one specific dance, while other broader chapters like *Dance Crazes and Dance-Floor Cool* look at wider themes. In telling the story of dance throughout history, Hylton examines race, class and gender and the impact they’ve had on dance and vice versa. The reader learns that early ballet was performed in royal courts and sponsored by Marie de’ Medici as a display of wealth and power, while country dances were often a pastime of the working classes. In America, dance history is largely coloured and influenced by the country’s past, with refugees from the French Revolution having brought their own styles of dance to places like New Orleans, and freed slaves using African dance to retain their identity in the US. The histories Hylton writes about often cross social barriers and reveal many dances to be amalgamations of different types of culture and heritage. Through his research, Hylton has achieved a fascinating record of social history through the prism of dance.

The stand-out aspect of this book is the fantastic array of drawings, photographs, diagrams and artwork from the British Library’s collection that accompany Hylton’s history. Featuring over 200 illustrations, these images demonstrate the beauty and power of the dances described in the text and showcase styles from the rumba to the foxtrot. The pictures also capture the essence of self-expression that Hylton emphasises is at the heart of dance history. This book is the perfect read for those interested in dance, or those who are keen to learn more about an art form that is a vital part of many cultures around the world. ***ES***

★★★★☆

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

FRIDA

Director: Julie Taymor **Starring:** Salma Hayek, Alfred Molina, Geoffrey Rush **Country:** Mexico **Year:** 2002

Does this biopic do the radical Mexican artist justice or fall into formulaic traps?

C

VERDICT: Gets a lot of facts right, but unfortunately fudges many others for dramatic purposes

01 The film begins with Frida Kahlo's (Hayek) childhood in the build up to the bus accident that would shape her adult life. All the details here are accurate, including being pierced by a metal rod and even the gold dust falling on her as she lay in the wreck.

02 Strangely, the film doesn't go as deep into Kahlo's health issues as it could. She also had polio as a child and frequently needed a cane or wheelchair to move around. It is true, however, that she developed her painting while in recovery from the accident.

03 Kahlo and Diego Rivera (Molina) had an infamously tumultuous relationship in which each was frequently unfaithful. While Kahlo was bisexual, the relationship in the film with Tina Modotti (Ashley Judd) has likely been exaggerated for dramatic effect.

04 From 1937 to 1939, Kahlo and Rivera did welcome Leon Trotsky (Rush) and his wife to their home and Kahlo likely had an affair with the communist revolutionary. But the implication the affair drove Trotsky out only to be assassinated appears unfounded.

05 Kahlo's politics aren't given much time in the movie, with more focus on her relationship with Rivera and her obsessing over his infidelity. She placed politics at the heart of her work, was a communist and protested CIA involvement in South America.

REROS, ARTISTAS PINTORE
ESCULTORES DE MEXI

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Did you know?

Sweet pierogi are often made in the summer using apricots, cherries or apples.

PIEROGI

A STAPLE OF POLISH CUISINE, POLAND, 13TH CENTURY – PRESENT

The national dish of Poland has a long but also slightly obscured history. Pierogi are filled dumplings whose roots likely coalesce with ravioli from Italy and gyoza in Japan. The semicircular filled dumplings, usually made with either pasta dough or pastry dough, are thought to have arrived in the region around the 13th century. Some stories say they came along the Silk Road with Marco Polo, while others pin them to Saint Hyacinth, the patron saint of pierogi, who is thought to have introduced the dish from Kyivan Rus'. The first written recipe came in 1682 in the *Compendium Ferculorum* by Stanisław Czerniecki. Originally thought of as peasant food, pierogi would have traditionally been filled with simple, seasonal ingredients, although more adventurous flavours are now popular too. Here we have a classic of potato and cheese, known as pierogi ruskie, but there are plenty of other variations you can also try.

Ingredients

Dough
- 250g of unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp of kosher salt
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 tbsp of vegetable oil

Filling
- 250g waxy potatoes (or your preference), chopped
- 150g of cheddar cheese, grated
- 3 tbsp of butter

To finish
- 2 large shallots or one medium onion, diced
- Sour cream

METHOD

01 Add the flour to a large mixing bowl with the salt and whisk to combine.

02 Stir in the vegetable oil. This should begin to make a crumbly dough.

03 Stir in the egg until combined and then transfer the dough to a well-floured surface.

04 Knead the dough for at least 5-7 minutes or until the dough is smooth. You can add a little water if needed, but hold back from doing so until at least that amount of time.

05 Cover the dough with a dampened cloth and rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.

06 Boil the potatoes in a pan of salted water until soft, drain well and allow to cool.

07 When cooled, transfer potatoes to a large bowl and add the grated cheese and butter. Mash together until combined (you can add other ingredients here, like onions or greens).

08 Cut the dough into two pieces, leaving one under the cloth. Have a small bowl of flour and another of water to hand. Dust your work surface and a baking sheet with flour.

09 Roll out the dough until about 3mm thick, then cut 12-15 disks of dough using a 7.5cm cookie cutter or the rim of a glass (scraps can be used for simple pasta).

10 For each disk, spoon in a little less than a tablespoon of filling into the middle.

11 Fold the dough over to enclose the filling and pinch the sides together. Make sure the filling isn't breaking through. Wet your finger with the water to moisten the dough if needed.

12 Repeat with the rest of the disks of dough and transfer to the baking sheet as you go, working as quickly as you can. The pierogi can be frozen at this point if you're not cooking them immediately.

13 To cook, add them to boiling water (but don't overcrowd the pot) for four to five minutes until puffy. Remove with a slotted spoon and allow to drain if cooking more.

14 Alternatively, pierogi can be pan fried in butter for 2 minutes (again be sure not to overcrowd the pan).

15 Serve hot with cooked shallots/onions and sour cream.

NEXT MONTH TEUTONIC KNIGHTS' LAST STAND ON SALE 26 JANUARY

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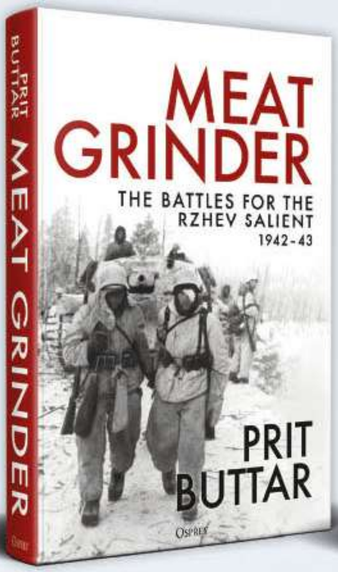
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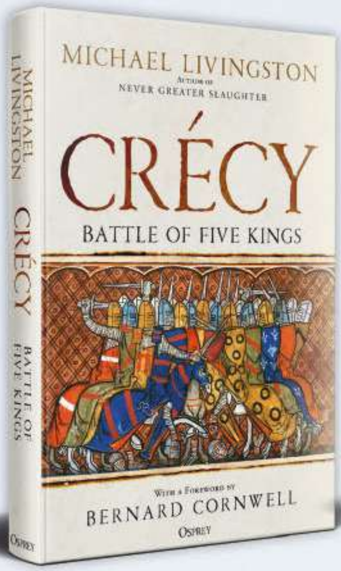
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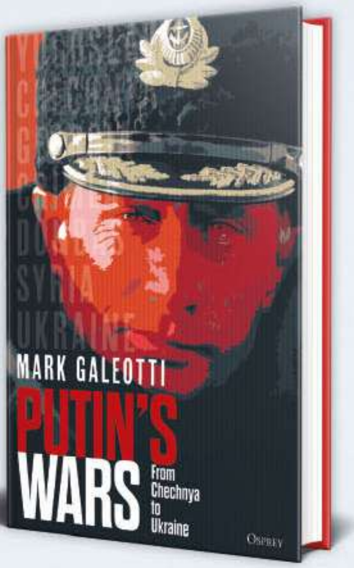
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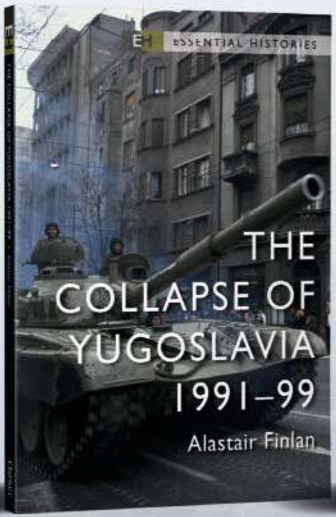
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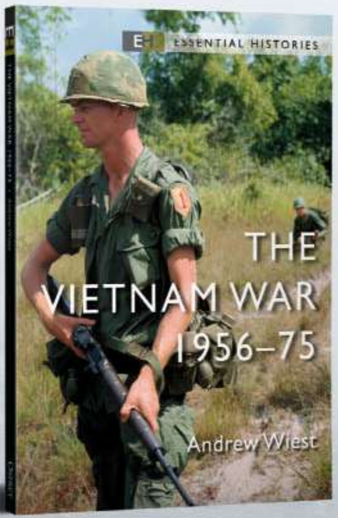
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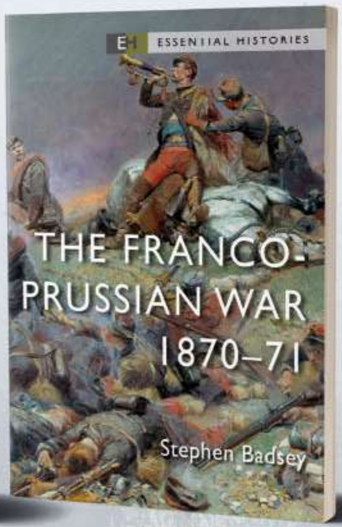
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